



Sustainable Cities
Research Institute

Tackling Barriers to Take-up of Fuel Poverty Alleviation Measures

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Executive Summary

Although there has been much work around the take-up of fuel poverty alleviation programmes carried out this has generally focussed on evidence from frontline managers and other stakeholders. Any investigation with end users has been minimal. Funded by Eaga Partnership Charitable Trust, Sustainable Cities Research Institute carried out a community-based investigation into barriers and possible solutions to the uptake of fuel poverty alleviation programmes.

A combination of desk-based research with frontline staff and Participatory Appraisal (PA) techniques with communities were used to carry out this research. 362 people took part in the PA and 17 frontline staff returned detailed questionnaires.

4 areas were studied: 3 with poor and one with good take-up. Additionally vulnerable groups of consumers were identified; elderly, Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups and rural consumers. Each of the 3 areas with poor take-up has a good concentration of one of the identified vulnerable groups.

- Middlesbrough - good take-up for the general population
- Somerset (Priorswood and Halcon) - large older population not accessing fuel poverty measures
- Birmingham (Handsworth, Small Heath, and Sparkbrook) - large BME population not accessing fuel poverty measures
- Hambleton and Richmondshire - rural area

The research identified 7 major barriers and possible solutions:

1. *Lack of awareness*, too much confusing information leads to poor awareness of appropriate schemes. There is a need for careful targeting of information matching audience with appropriate media.
2. *Lack of partnership working* between the agencies providing the alleviation measures and with agencies in contact with the vulnerable groups needs to be improved. This will assist in delivering a more effectively targeted, concise message.
3. Many of the participants expressed concerns centring on lack of *trust*. Frontline staff also recognise this as an area which generates reticence from householders to engage with schemes. Solutions and suggestions include: home visits, client champions, referrals from other agencies already trusted by the client, visits to clubs/organisations etc. that potential beneficiaries attend, recommendations from family members, and letting people in an area know that other people have had work done by the scheme.
4. There is a large degree of confusion over *eligibility*, resulting in a need to clearly inform would be beneficiaries of the eligibility criteria and to simplify processes as much as possible. This may also be enhanced through partnership working.

5. Not all *property and tenure types* have schemes that are applicable. Most noticeable of these is where the vulnerable customer is neither the owner/tenant nor where a communal heating system is in operation. Extension of the type of alleviation measures and eligibility criteria will widen the access. Also, working with landlords to promote the schemes will help.
6. Frontline staff often state that people are too proud to accept free help. *Pride* as a barrier was not well supported in the evidence from the community. During the verification process only 4 from a possible 73 agreed with the statement “too proud to accept free help” while 27 disagreed with it. Conversely a high number of participants agreed with statements suggesting free help was welcomed. Using positive statements from the community during promotion will increase the view that it is acceptable to use this sort of help.
7. *Information* is a wide issue and not only does there need to be information about the schemes but information regarding the effectiveness of cavity wall insulation and other measures needs to be publicised, perhaps through a Public Service Announcement.

Key recommendations

- Develop clear, concise area based information in partnership with all agencies operating in that area. Agencies include; PCT, fuel poverty agencies, welfare agencies, and any other relevant agency dealing with vulnerable people.
- Develop a strategic advertising scheme specific to the needs of the area.
- General information campaign with a clear message from a trusted source to dispel any misconceptions about eligibility.
- Avoid narrow stereotyping of potential clients.
- Use language that is relevant to the client and potential clients.
- Be aware that the assumptions of the frontline staff will impact on their effectiveness. Assist staff in examining their assumptions.
- Build trust through working with agencies established in the community.
- Work with the Landlords Association to promote the acceptance of schemes by tenants.
- Publicise that many different properties can benefit from schemes.

During the research just over half of the participants had heard of schemes to provide free or reduced cost cavity wall insulation, loft insulation, and heating systems. However the research was primarily to investigate the reasons for not taking up the schemes and the examination of the findings focussed on those who had not taken up the schemes and those who had not heard of them.

The main issues identified for not taking up schemes were poor information and an inappropriate method of contacting potential clients.

The focus throughout the research was on hard to reach clients. It must be noted that while the experience of frontline staff may appear contrary to some of the findings presented here, the work was carried out with potential clients for whom the usual methods of contact are inappropriate. For example in the experience of frontline staff the door to door calling method has a high success rate. While this is true for the majority of clients the groups who were the focus of the research generally stated that they did not like people calling at the door for any reason. This was not, as has been suggested, due to some confusion on the potential clients' part between people calling at the door asking them to switch suppliers and those offering schemes such as Warm Front. They were very clear that they didn't welcome callers at the door per se.

In applying the recommendations developed in this report, agencies offering fuel poverty alleviation measures must bear in mind that the findings relate to the hard to reach groups and that generally the methods they are currently employing are effective for the majority.

1 Background

Nationally it is recognised that much work around fuel poverty issues has been undertaken by organisations such as National Energy Action (NEA) and Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE). Building on the important Sefton (2004)¹ report, research on fuel poverty has been concerned with national programmes such as Warmfront and Warmzones, as well as local initiatives; and looking at issues such as rural fuel poverty; for example NEA's research projects on optimising take-up² and on tackling fuel poverty at local and regional level³, both on behalf of DEFRA or CSE's research on quantifying and classifying rural fuel poverty⁴ and their fuel poverty and energy efficiency action plan for Cornwall⁵. The optimising take up research by NEA aimed to find out more about the reasons for non-take up of energy efficiency schemes in Warm Zone areas; the fuel poverty at local and regional level research reviewed policy and service delivery domains to outline the potential for action at local and regional level to tackle fuel poverty. It developed policy proposals to stimulate local and regional bodies to improve their performance and realise more of their potential. It also made recommendations on actions that might be pursued, particularly by the Fuel Poverty Advisory Group (FPAG), to ensure policy proposals were taken forward. The CSE research on rural fuel poverty aimed to quantify and report on the extent and characteristics of rural fuel poverty in England, make comparisons with urban fuel poverty and rural deprivation, and make recommendations appropriate to both rural policy and anti-fuel poverty policy; the Cornwall Action Plan aimed to assist Cornwall County Council achieve their Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) the target on 'tackling energy deprivation'. The Action Plan aimed to assess the problem in Cornwall, ascertain the most effective methodologies for tackling fuel poverty, and identify and prioritise areas for future fuel poverty and energy efficiency work in Cornwall.

The evidence for the barriers to take-up has come largely from frontline staff, managers and other stakeholders. There has been minimal involvement of end users, or indeed those people who would be end users were they to take-up the measures to alleviate fuel poverty. It has been identified that there are vulnerable groups from a socio-economic definition e.g. BME communities, disabled, and long term ill that are not being reached by the programmes offered. It is now timely to conduct an in depth investigation into what lies behind this and to shift the focus of the research from agency stakeholders to

¹ *Aiming High – An evaluation of the potential contribution of Warm Front towards meeting the Government's fuel poverty target in England - a report to the Eaga Partnership Charitable Trust*, Tom Sefton, ESRC Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion, London School of Economics (2004)

² *Improving take-up and drop-out in free to client energy schemes* NEA March 2006

³ *Tackling fuel poverty at local and regional level* NEA 2006

⁴ *Quantifying and Classifying Rural Fuel Poverty*, Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) (2003-05)

⁵ *Cornwall Fuel Poverty and Energy Efficiency Action Plan*, Centre for Sustainable Energy CSE (2005)

end users, or potential end users, by adopting a community based appraisal of the situation.

2 Introduction

Sustainable Cities Research Institute at Northumbria University recognised the gap in the take-up of fuel poverty alleviation programmes and carried out a community based investigation into the barriers to take-up.

This project builds on previous research in this area by exploring the social and cultural variances that affect the take-up of fuel poverty and energy efficiency help for vulnerable and disadvantaged consumers. In carrying out this exploration, the barriers (real and perceived) to take-up will be uncovered, resulting in developing and documenting effective ways of countering the resistance currently being observed. The project used mainly qualitative methods for the investigation; these will be analysed by identifying emerging themes.

This report presents the findings of the fieldwork and desk research.

3 Methodology

3.1 Approaches

The investigation was carried out in 3 geographic areas identified as problematic with regards to take-up of energy efficiency and fuel poverty programmes by vulnerable groups. For comparative purposes an area reporting good take-up by vulnerable groups was also investigated using the same approach:

- Community appraisal in areas of identified problematic take-up and an area of good take-up, within the target vulnerable groups. The community appraisal was carried out using a range of participatory techniques as appropriate. Participatory Appraisal (PA) techniques (outlined below) are considered to be the most effective way of contacting hard to reach groups as opposed to interviews, focus groups, and questionnaires. The effectiveness of PA stems from the engaging of community members in their own settings and respecting that they are the experts in their own situation. This was the main focus of the research.
- Desk based research to identify individual clients in contact with the agencies for help. Where information is available, follow up semi-structured telephone interviews was to be carried out with a sample of individuals to investigate reasons for take-up, drop out, or no action.(This was replaced by the organisation desk study as it was decided by the steering group that the PA work would sufficiently cover the individuals perspectives and better use of time and resources would be made by concentrating on stakeholder organisations and frontline staff)
- Organisation/agency interviews to gain an overview of the issues and problems in uptake from their perspective, previous practices and their effectiveness.

Participatory Appraisal (PA) Techniques

These are a range of techniques originating in the 3rd world, developed and adapted for use in a number of different countries. PA uses mostly visual methods and a number of 'tools' (including mapping, impact ranking, spidergrams) to start up an open discussion in a non-threatening, non-directive way. The participants were respected as the experts in their situation and best placed to provide solutions to any problems or issues that the discussions uncover. In dealing with sensitive issues this method was extremely successful as the issue can be approached in a roundabout way i.e. rather than base a discussion around why fuel poverty help is not used the discussion began with an exploration of types of heating/lighting within the home and lead onto issues around cost, efficiency, and improvements to reduce cost and improve efficiency. During these discussions an educative process took place, with participants sharing knowledge with each other and the researcher providing information on the range of services available. These techniques were particularly useful in overcoming barriers such as literacy, language differences, and suspicion of research. Throughout the process a

rapport was built up between the researcher, the group, and between members of the group. PA formed the bulk of the research and yielded rich qualitative data which was analysed by emerging themes. The results were then presented graphically and translated into quantitative data.

Verification of the results of the data from all strands of the research was collated and presented to the participating communities. This allowed communities the chance to refute, verify or add to the results. During the process of collating the results to present to the communities a triangulation of findings took place. This compared the results from interviews, desk based analysis and PA giving internal validation or refuted the findings, depending on the degree of fit between the three strands of the research.

As the target group were identified as vulnerable the project methods were approved by the Institute's ethics committee. The team are all dedicated to equal opportunities, working and experienced in dealing with vulnerable groups and sensitive issues.

3.2 Aims

- Uncover the real and perceived barriers to the take-up of fuel poverty and energy efficiency help for vulnerable and disadvantaged consumers. These are typically consumers from BME, disabled, long term ill, elderly and low income groups.
- Explore what motivates the inquiry into and subsequent acceptance or rejection of help (including financial products and services)
- Determine if the acceptance/rejection of help is affected by the type of approach and the person/organisation involved in offering the help
- Explore the range of reasons for uneven take-up of support and services across a range of social factors.

3.3 Objectives

- Carry out a full appraisal to investigate the above aims through a community based appraisal
- Conduct semi-structured telephone interviews with fuel poverty alleviation organisations
- In partnership with participants develop effective ways of increasing take-up
- Document the findings of the investigation in a clear and easy to understand format relevant for all agencies to access

4 Community based appraisal

4.1 Methodology changes

Many of the groups visited were involved in activities such as dancing, while others had a high number of people with hearing problems. These groups did not lend themselves to the PA style discussion so the Rapid Appraisal (RA) questionnaire (appendix A) was used, allowing the researchers to talk on a one to one basis with respondents while they took refreshments. RA is a conversational style questionnaire with open ended stimulus questions allowing the respondents the freedom to expand on any area they wish to or move on quickly if it is not relevant to their situation or should they not wish to answer a particular question.

4.2 Sampling rationale

4 areas are being studied. 3 have demonstrated poor take-up of fuel poverty alleviation measures and 1 has good take-up. To gain a good cross section of vulnerable consumer groups the steering group experts guided identified the following groups: elderly, BME, and rural consumers. Each of the 3 areas with poor take-up has a good concentration of one of the identified vulnerable groups. The areas selected under the guidance of the steering group are as follows:

- Middlesbrough - good take-up for the general population
- Somerset (Priorswood and Halcon) - large older population not accessing fuel poverty measures
- Birmingham (Handsworth, Small Heath, and Sparkbrook) - large BME population not accessing fuel poverty measures
- Hambleton and Richmondshire - rural area

5 Community findings

A mixture of RA and PA has been carried out with 362 participants (230 female, 167 male). Some RA has been carried out on the streets and in group settings (211) with a refusal rate of around 1 in 3. There were 73 participants taking part in the verification exercises. The findings from these exercises are discussed below. All numbers stated are counts of responses; this is due to the fact that participants may make more than one response to some of the questions.

As there were different schemes operating in the areas where community appraisal was carried out the researchers just gave a general overview about the fact that there were schemes available that offered free or reduced cost cavity wall insulation, loft insulation and improvements to heating systems. An Energywatch leaflet was given to all participants as a means of them gaining more information. The decision to keep the information about the schemes general was based on the fact that the researchers did not have enough detailed knowledge of the intricacies of the various schemes and eligibility

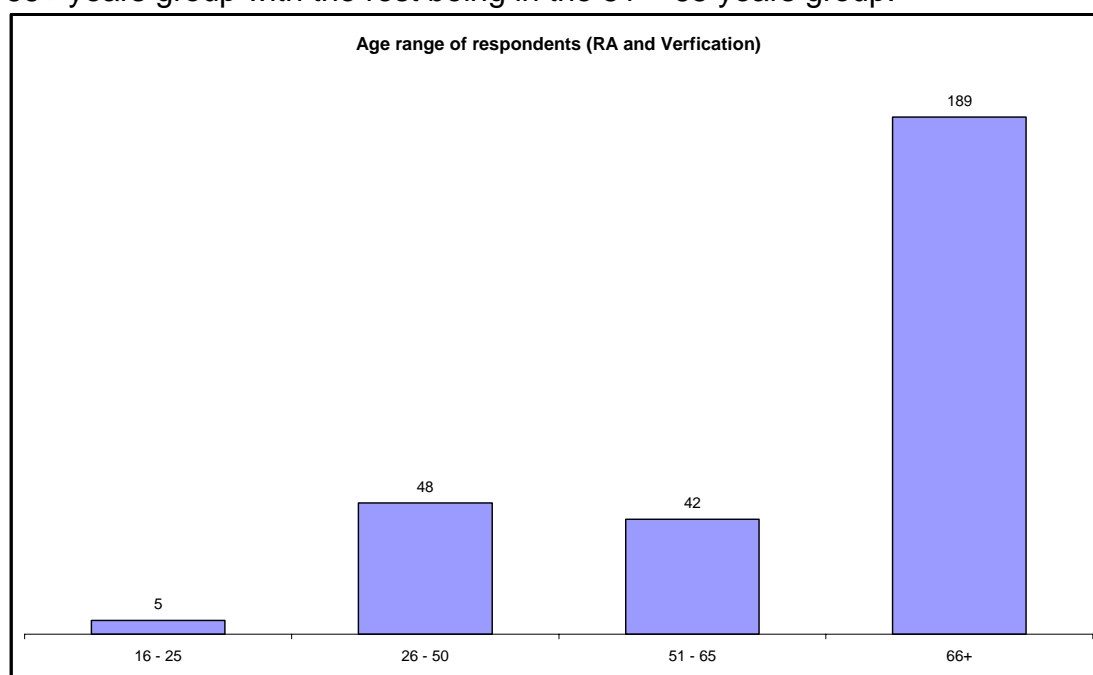
criteria. Any attempt to give out details of individual schemes may have caused confusion.

5.1 Gender

A total of 362 people took part in the research (230 female, 167 male). There were 211 RA participants (147 female, 64 male), 78 participants took part in PA exercises (45 female, 33 male), and 73 took part in the verification exercises (38 female, 35 male).

5.2 Age range

The participants in the RA and verification exercises provided their ages which are presented in the table below. The PA participants were not asked to give this information as it can be considered inhibiting and disempowering in a group situation. It is estimated that the majority of PA participants fell into the 66+ years group with the rest being in the 51 – 65 years group.



5.3 Ethnicity

The RA participants were asked to describe their own ethnicity. This is more empowering than being presented with a list to choose from. The responses give a much wider range than the standard tick box approach and are presented below, in terms of each area. The widest range of ethnicity is seen in Birmingham, the area selected for its high ethnic mix. Any issues distinct to this area may be considered pertinent to ethnic minority groups.

Richmond and Hambleton (25)	Middlesbrough (34)	Birmingham (93)	Somerset and Taunton (59)
<i>Ethnicity</i> British: 2 English: 1 Londoner: 1	<i>Ethnicity</i> Irish: 1 White British: 33	<i>Ethnicity</i> Afro- Caribbean: 1 Asian: 8 British: 23	<i>Ethnicity</i> No response: 2 British: 20 Devonshire/English: 1

Very English: 1 White: 3 White British: 16 Yorkshire: 1		Brummie: 3 Brummie British: 1 Brummie/west Indian: 1 Caribbean: 1 English: 33 Indian: 3 Irish: 9 Irish origin: 1 Northern Irish: 1 Pakistani: 2 West Indian: 2 White English: 4	English: 27 English born and bred: 1 English out and out: 1 English rose: 1 English/local Somerset: 1 Londoner: 2 Scottish: 2 Welsh: 1
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5.4 Area comparisons

The following sections examine responses to RA and PA exercises to specific questions about schemes with a focus on comparing each area to determine similarities/differences. A complete table of area responses is attached at appendix B. RA and PA generate complex responses and in order to simplify the discussion of the findings only the main themes are presented. For instance in the chart outlining the responses to the question "would you use a scheme?" only three categories of response are shown. The figures are omitted for no response and those that do not fall into either yes, no, or unsure. When asked about schemes, rather than encumber the participants with long descriptions of the many different schemes, researchers generalised about schemes that offered loft insulation, cavity wall insulation and heating systems. All numbers stated are counts of responses; this is due to the fact that participants may make more than one response to some of the questions.

5.4.1 Have you heard of any of the schemes?

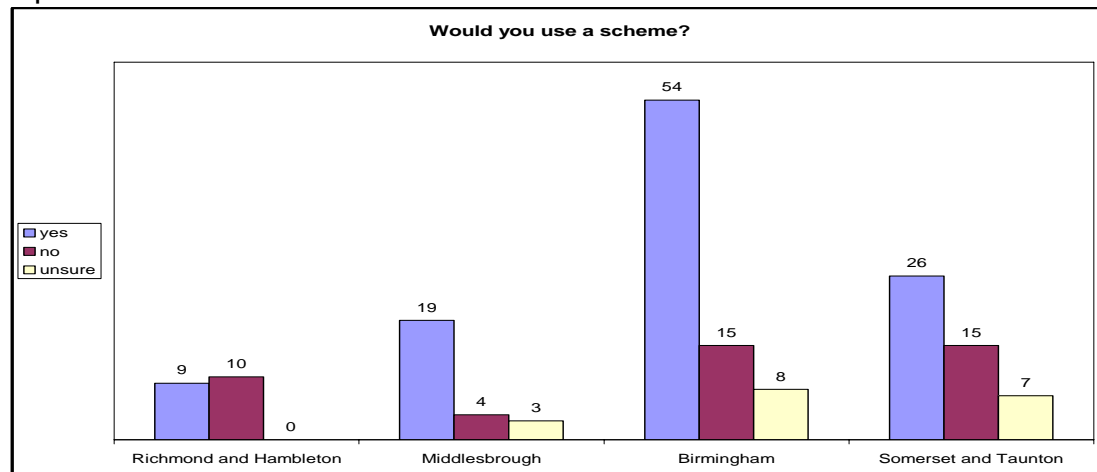
In Middlesbrough (24 of 34) and Birmingham (55 of 93) about two thirds of the RA participants had heard of schemes. In the Richmond and Hambleton area (16 of 25) about 2/3rds had not heard of any schemes. In the Somerset and Taunton area about half had heard of schemes (26 yes, 25 no). Overall out of the 211 RA participants 111 stated they had heard of schemes and 73 had not. Of those who had heard of schemes around one fifth (22) said they would not use a scheme.

All of the PA participants in Birmingham (18), and Somerset and Taunton (7) had heard of schemes. The PA sessions in Richmond and Hambleton were lively and the scribing on the sheets reflected this making it difficult to quote exact numbers. However, it is estimated that there was a half and half split between those who had heard of schemes and those who hadn't. There were no PA sessions carried out in Middlesbrough. It must be noted that PA sessions in Birmingham and Richmond and Hambleton were arranged through contacts from energywatch and eaga, so awareness raising had been carried out with these groups.

From this evidence it is clear that the message is being received best in the Middlesbrough and Birmingham areas. Somerset and Taunton, and Richmond and Hambleton areas showed poorer awareness of the schemes.

5.4.2 Would you use a scheme?

The following table shows some of the RA responses to this question. Some respondents commented that they would use a scheme but as some had already used a scheme or paid for insulation etc themselves. Due to the complexity of the responses only the answers “yes”, “no”, and “unsure” are represented in the chart.



Richmond and Hambleton shows an almost even split between those who would use a scheme and those who wouldn't. It must be noted that of the 10 who said they wouldn't use a scheme 6 went on to say that their homes were already insulated. It may be that some of the 6 whose homes were already insulated would use a scheme were their homes not insulated.

In Middlesbrough the majority of participants said they would use a scheme and, as expected in the area selected for its good take-up, most of these stated they had taken up the schemes. A small number of participants expressed the view that they were not eligible and did not have enough information.

Participants in Birmingham returned a resounding yes they would use a scheme, 14 of these stated that they had used a scheme. Of the participants who said they would not use a scheme (15), 4 were already insulated, 1 lived in a council house and 2 thought they weren't eligible. Those who were unsure or gave vague answers stated:

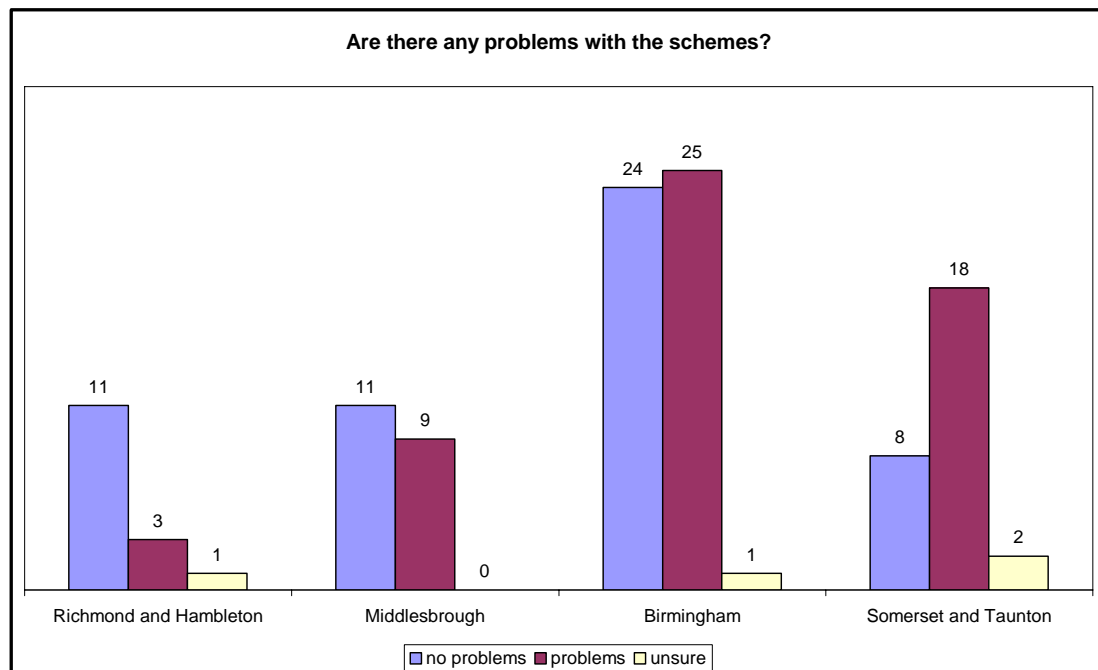
- “would but feels not for him”
- “no problems with insulation”
- “feels has enough insulation”
- “don't think it makes much difference”
- “doubt it”
- “probably”
- “would but already insulated”
- “think not eligible”

In Somerset and Taunton those who said they would use a scheme represented just over half of the participants who responded to this question. 3 of these already had used a scheme and another 3 gave responses:

- “did”
- “sorted out”
- “used loft and cavity”

While these 26 represent a good take-up in the area, it must be viewed against the 22 who said no or were unsure. Of these 2 lived in mobile homes, and other reasons stated include: “live in a council house”, “don’t need any”, “feel not eligible”, “can’t be bothered” and “live in a new house”. The range of answers indicates a poor understanding of the schemes as in some of the cases stated the reasons given for not wanting to use a scheme were not based on sound information e.g. “don’t think it makes much difference”. This may in part be a reflection of the information being too complex and possibly not relevant for the older audience. In this instance it would be useful to review the type of information being used in the area and target the audience differently.

5.4.3 Are there any problems with the schemes?



The table above shows some of the responses to the RA exercise.

The majority of Richmond and Hambleton participants said there was no problem with the schemes. The unsure participant stated “don’t think so” and the 3 who said there were problems said:

- “no wouldn’t want anyone coming to door, would prefer a letter”
- “not at door”
- “not sure about people at door”

In Middlesbrough one of the participants who said there was no problem went on to say “no (think someone got in touch) very good, very quick”. Those who said there were problems fell into two categories: the way the schemes are operated, and the way the schemes are advertised. The minority who mentioned problems with the way the schemes are operated stated:

- “Time consuming working and fitting, in finding out, applying etc”
- “awkward fitting in with lifestyle - hassle arranging around volunteer work and lifestyle ... “

The problems with the way the schemes were advertised include:

- “not door”
- “... leaflets bad, phone bad”
- “doorstep - wont answer”

Of those participants in Birmingham who responded to this question there is almost an even split between there being a problem and no problem. The no problem responses included some very positive statements about the schemes:

- “very smooth”
- “fine”
- “good workmen”

14 of the responses stated that there were problems and these were to do with the advertisement of the schemes including:

- “not enough leaflets. Hard information”
- “not enough information. Unaware of scheme”
- “don't hear about them”

In Somerset and Taunton 8 participants said there were no problems with the schemes and most added that the workmen were good. All of the 18 participants stating there were problems with the schemes cited awareness of the schemes as the problem, including:

- “no information about them”
- “not aware”
- “not enough information in leaflets to outline entitlement”
- “not heard”

5.4.4 How can the schemes be improved?

The majority of suggestions from participants across all four areas focussed on information and how best to get it to recipients.

Participants in Richmond and Hambleton stated that they were already fully insulated. 8 stated that letters and leaflets were the best way of getting the information out, with one participant adding “not at doorstep”. 2 said there was no way to improve the schemes.

In Middlesbrough there was a variety of preferences. Official letters were popular with 14 respondents who stated that they would take more notice of these. 7 would throw away leaflets although 2 did state that they read them but

didn't trust them. 5 did not like cold calling at the door. 5 preferred the personal touch.

Birmingham participants had some practical suggestions relating to the operation of schemes and information including:

- "to choose where to put radiators"
- "Shorten time gap."
- "Save money is an attraction. Clear information. Put it in council house office, job centres, leaflet all houses. Put all information in one leaflet"

The majority of suggestions again concentrate on information, 5 said there was no way to improve schemes. 2 other responses were:

- "you do" (this particular comment was directed at the researcher who also gave out the energywatch leaflet)
- "took up scheme"

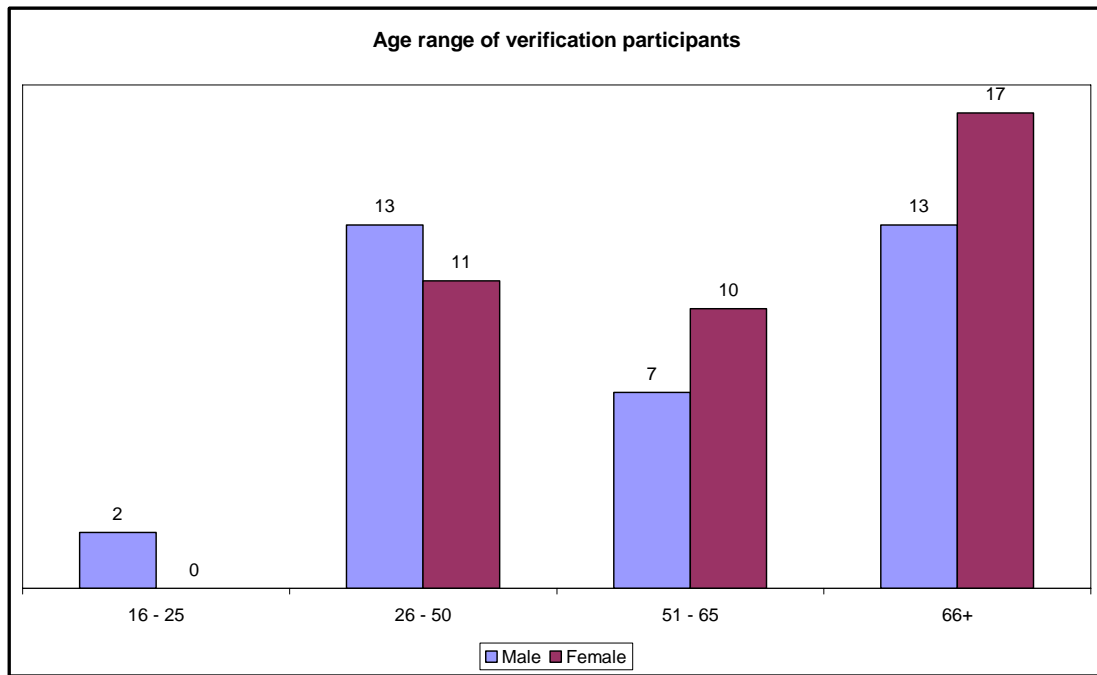
Somerset and Taunton again focussed on information. 2 respondents thought there was no way to improve the schemes: "no", "nothing". 1 said "don't need any". 8 were unaware or needed more information. 2 said "being told about the schemes face to face. Need more help as disabled. Would talk to someone who knocked on the door".

The resounding message from all the participants is that there is no 'one size fits all' when it comes to getting the information out. The dominant concerns are trust, convenience, and clarity. The preference in Birmingham, and Somerset and Taunton was for personal information given to them face to face. The preference in the Richmond and Hambleton area was for letters and leaflets while in Middlesbrough it was for official letters but not leaflets.

5.5 Verification of findings

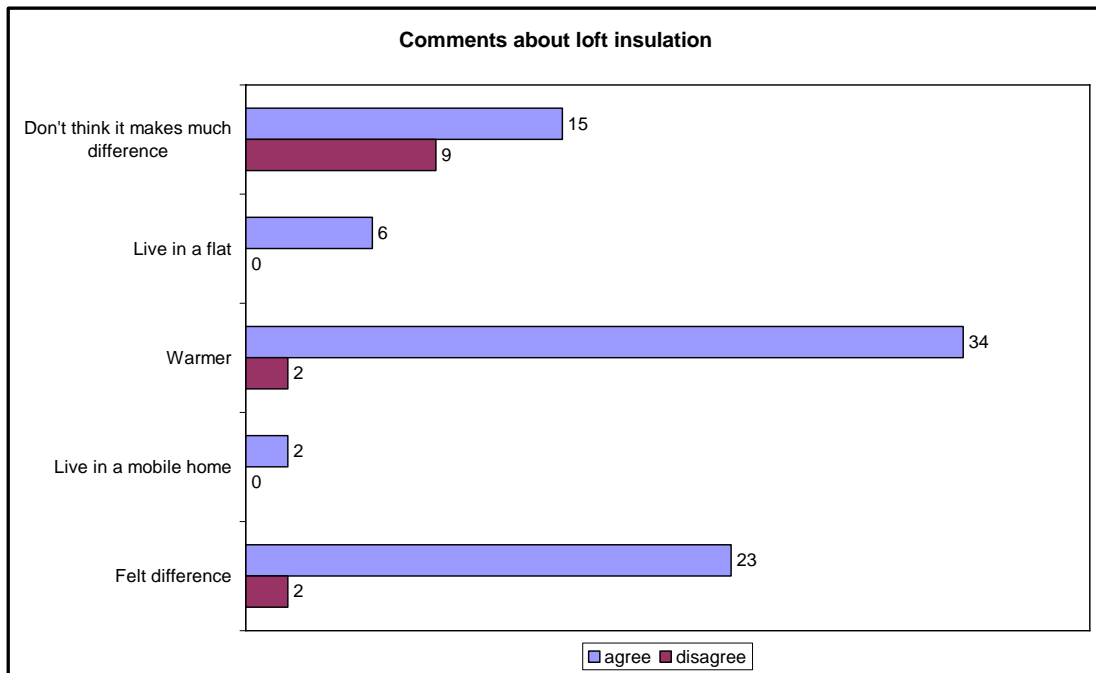
Verification takes the collated findings from the RA and PA, lists them and takes them back into the communities for triangulation. The emphasis is on cavity wall/loft insulation, ways to communicate the existence of schemes, and statements regarding take up/non take up of schemes. Participants were asked to indicate with stickers if they agree or disagree with the statements made by participants in the RA and PA sessions. There was no limit to the amount of statements each participant could agree or disagree with. This section discusses the findings of this process. The participants in the PA, RA and verification processes were all different people.

73 people participated in the verification process, with a session being carried out in each of the study areas. The following chart shows the age ranges of those taking part.



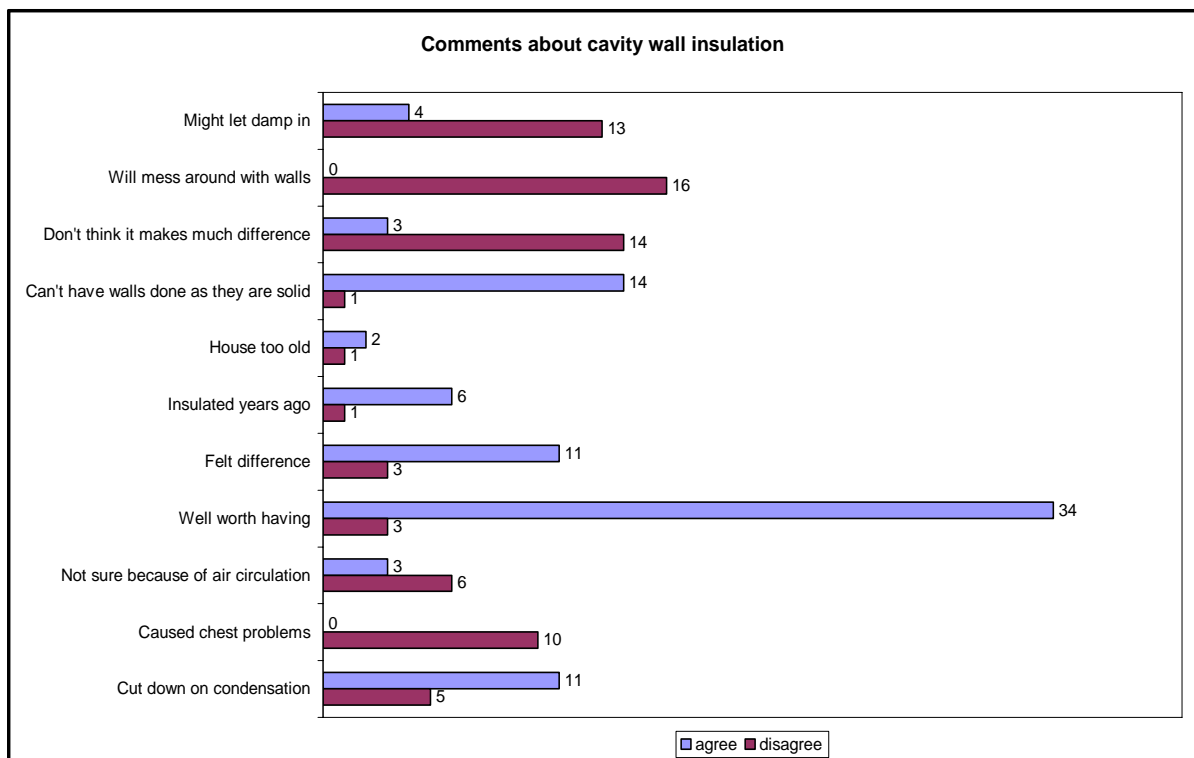
This represents a much more balanced spread of participants than that of the RA exercise where the majority of participants fell into the 66+ years group.

To begin with participants were asked to indicate if they agreed or disagreed with the comments already made by previous participants (these could have been anecdotal or based on experience) about loft insulation and cavity wall insulation. This helped set the scene for the topic being investigated and allowed for an exchange of information. It also gave an indication of the knowledge about insulation. In all instances the participants were asked to add any other comments they might like to make. One respondent stated that for loft insulation there are “two sides to it, bills not high in winter, water heats up in summer” (on further questioning the respondent felt that an un-insulated loft allowed the water in the tank to heat up). The following chart shows the response made to the comments on loft insulation.



From this it can be seen that not all dwellings lend themselves to this type of insulation and this needs to be taken into consideration when gauging take-up of insulation programmes. While there is a mixed message recorded for the comment “don’t think it makes much difference” there is an overwhelming indication that it makes homes warmer and the difference can be felt.

The next chart shows what people noted in relation to cavity wall insulation.



Again it is apparent that not all dwellings lend themselves to this type of insulation (“can’t have walls done as they are solid”: 14, “house too old”: 2).

Most participants seemed well informed about the benefits of cavity wall insulation. The majority disagreeing with the statements: “might let damp in” 13; “will mess around with walls” 16; “don’t think it makes much difference” 14; “caused chest problems” 10. The majority agreeing with the statements “felt the difference”: 11, “well worth having”: 34. The responses suggest that there is still some educational work to be done around the statements “not sure because of air circulation” - agree 3, disagree 6, and “cut down on condensation” - agree 11, disagree 5.

Participants also made some ‘other’ comments: “Don’t know anything about it, or not enough to comment”, “Don’t think it’s a good idea to fill in the cavity if it has been built with one”, “Initially caused condensation”. The most common misconceptions are around the issue of condensation and poor air circulation caused by cavity walls being filled in.

After asking participants to consider statements about insulation they were then asked to agree or disagree with a number of statements made about schemes. The statement agreed with most often was “well worth having” (27 agree, 1 disagree) and the one most often disagreed with was “too proud to accept free help” (27 disagree, 4 agree). The statement “would if free and no mess or even pay half” was agreed with by 7 respondents and disagreed with by 3, “good grant” (9 agree, 1 disagree). 23 respondents agreed that “save money is an attraction”, 16 agreed with “would if thought it would save money”, and 6 agreed with “on benefit and will take any help I can” (there were no participants disagreeing with any of these statements).

Statements focussing on information about the schemes were responded to as follows:

- “suspicious about advertisements that’s come through the door” 13 disagree, 11 agree
- “not heard of any that are suitable” 9 agree, 4 disagree
- “need more information” 11 agree, none disagree
- “no information” 8 agree, 1 disagree
- “not enough information in leaflets to outline entitlement” 5 agree, none disagree

Statements to do with eligibility were responded to as follows:

- “don’t claim benefit so not entitled” 5 agree, none disagree
- “usually over 60’s get it” 2 agree, none disagree
- “on pension so can’t get anything” 2 agree, 2 disagree
- “not sure applicable to me” 9 agree, none disagree
- “would not be eligible for any of the schemes” 3 agree, 6 disagree

Statements around the operation of schemes were responded to as follows:

- “rang number, couldn’t get through for more information” no response either way
- “good workmen” 6 agree, 2 disagree
- “used scheme” 5 agree, none disagree
- “person came and I/we never saw her again” 1 agree, none disagree

- “they are going to ask questions about income” 12 agree, 11 disagree
- “bad reputation of listed engineers” 1 agree, 2 disagree

Other statements centred on the issue of trust “felt the callers about cavity wall were bogus” (8 agree, 2 disagree), “If daughter/son thought it was good idea” (4 agree, none disagree). The type of property is also an issue: “council property” (10 agree, none disagree), “all done via housing trust” (2 agree, none disagree). When talking about cavity wall insulation the issue of upheaval was mentioned by respondents, some stated “can’t be bothered” (1 agree, 1 disagree).

Finally participants were asked to comment on statements about how information about schemes is distributed (these statements were drawn from responses in PA sessions asking how respondents preferred to be informed about schemes).

Letter

- “official letter” 28 agree, none disagree
- “letter from government” 20 agree, none disagree
- “letter to occupier” 8 agree, 8 disagree
- “letter addressed personally” 8 agree, none disagree
- “application through post” 9 agree, 3 disagree

Leaflet

- “leaflet from individual scheme” 6 agree, 5 disagree
- “leaflet through door” 9 agree, 10 disagree
- “all information in one leaflet” 11 agree, 3 disagree
- “coming to do it leaflet” 4 disagree, none agree
- “leaflet in public places” 12 agree, none disagree

Personal

- “caller at door” 6 agree, 23 disagree
- “from an individual visiting club/organisation etc” 10 agree, 10 disagree
- “family member” 8 agree, none disagree

Media

- “T.V. programme” 14 agree, 9 disagree
- “advertisement in papers” 13 agree, 9 disagree

Charts showing the verification findings for “what people have said about schemes”, and “letting you know about schemes” are attached at Appendix C.

6 Desk based study

6.1 Introduction

The desk based study investigated issues which may affect the take-up of fuel poverty help, as identified by a range of organisations involved in fuel poverty alleviation. The resulting feedback obtained from these organisations will provide a useful comparison with that obtained from the participatory appraisal sessions and the views of vulnerable groups, as well as a comparison between different organisations and between the study areas.

The organisations contacted have also helped to identify community group contacts for the participatory appraisal sessions in each of the study areas comprising Middlesbrough, Hambleton/Richmondshire, Birmingham and Taunton.

6.2 Desk based methodology

The desk based aspect of the original methodology involved identifying individual clients in contact with agencies for fuel poverty help and conducting semi-structured telephone interviews with a sample of these to investigate reasons for take-up, drop-out or no action.

The steering group subsequently decided that this aspect of the research would be sufficiently covered by the participatory appraisal part of the research. Instead, and to avoid replication, it was agreed the desk based research should seek to gain an overview of the barriers to uptake from the perspective of stakeholder organisations. Additionally, it was agreed that the methodology for this should involve a short questionnaire to the relevant organisations followed up by a telephone reminder; it was felt that due to time constraints and the number of organisations to contact in each of the four study areas it would be impractical to conduct individual telephone interviews with all of the relevant organisations.

The revised methodological approach adopted for the desk study is as follows:

- Initial scoping and design of desk based research in consultation with the project Steering Group
- Identification of organisations involved in fuel poverty alleviation in each of the four study areas
- Design of a simple questionnaire around the issues of barriers to uptake of fuel poverty help
- Distribution of project outline and questionnaire to relevant contacts by email.

- Follow up telephone calls to relevant contacts
- Collation and analysis of questionnaire results

The questionnaire template is attached in Appendix D

6.3 Organisations Contacted:

Age Concern North Yorkshire
 Age Concern Somerset
 Age Concern Teeside
 Birmingham City Council
 Bristol and Somerset Energy Efficiency Advice Centre
 Care Direct Somerset
 Centre for Sustainable Energy
 Citizens Advice Bureau
 Community Council for Somerset
 Energy Watch
 Energy Saving Trust
 eaga plc
 Hambleton and Richmondshire Carers Association
 Hambleton and Richmondshire PCT
 Hambleton District Council
 Heatpac
 Home Improvement Agency
 Mendip District Council
 Mica Millfold Group
 Middlesbrough Primary Care Trust
 Middlesbrough Borough Council
 Middlesbrough Environment City
 Middlesbrough Groundwork
 Middlesbrough Voluntary Development Agency
 National Energy Action
 North Yorkshire County Council
 North Yorkshire PCT
 Powergen
 Retired Senior Volunteers Programme
 Richmondshire District Council
 Scottish Power
 Somerset Coast PCT
 Somerset County Council
 Taunton Deane Borough Council
 Tees and Durham Energy Advice
 Thirsk and Sowerby Community Care Association
 TNEY North Yorkshire NHS
 Vale and Dale Home Improvement Agency
 Womens Royal Volunteer Service
 York Energy Efficiency Advice Centre

6.4 Desk study results

6.4.1 Summary of main issues identified by organisations

A total of 17 questionnaires were returned from the range of organisations contacted.

The table at Appendix E lists the barriers identified in the returned questionnaires these are presented as verbatim quotes. Similar barriers have been grouped according to the relevant issue of concern and within each of these issues the barriers have been ranked according to their importance rating as defined by the organisation responsible.

The main issues identified are listed below and ranked according to the number of times barriers relating to that issue have been cited by the organisations consulted:

- Reticence of householders to engage (18 citations)
- Poor partnership working between and within organisations (13 citations)
- Poor awareness or understanding by householders (10 citations)
- Income related (9 citations)
- Language (8 citations)
- Complexity of assistance process (3 citations)
- Ineffective targeting of people at risk (2 citations)

6.4.2 Summary of incentives/solutions identified by organisations

The most commonly cited barrier to the uptake of fuel poverty help relates to the reticence of householders to engage. The key incentives/solutions identified by organisations include: the use of home visits; the use of female officers to deal with vulnerable female clients; the use of client champions/single point of contact to reassure and deal with queries; enhanced awareness raising of health and financial benefits of more energy efficient homes; enhanced and recurrent publicity to tackle potential stigmatisation attached to receipt of free assistance and; reassurance regarding the extent of privacy of information supplied by customers.

Poor partnership working was cited as the second most important barrier to the alleviation of fuel poverty. Key incentives/solutions identified by organisations include: a more formalised and streamlined process of communication between organisations, particularly Warm Front, Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), and Defra – it was felt this would enable more effective and useful information exchange between organisations, thus improving the targeting of eligible customers; a multi agency response for a range of guidance advice and help; a single point of contact programme coordinating efforts with shared incentives/targets/systems such as with the Middlesbrough ‘Single Point of Contact’ programme; appropriate awareness-

raising, training and feedback to health and social care professionals to encourage buy-in to the provision of advice to customers potentially at risk of fuel poverty.

The third most commonly cited issue relates to poor awareness or understanding of householders regarding help which is available. The key incentives/solutions identified by organisations include: simpler bills by fuel providers making it easier for customers to assess their levels of usage; improved customer relations on the part of fuel providers; more effective use of home surveyors to provide client advice and signposting; and increasing the provision of and access to appropriate, clear advice.

The fourth most commonly cited barrier relates to income issues with incentives/solutions including: simplifying and extending grant eligibility such as for all people earning below £15,000 per annum; ensuring additional payments required from the client (where the grant awarded does not cover the full amount for the energy efficiency/heating works) are paid by organisations such as local authorities, primary care trusts or landlords; and reduced fuel costs.

Language is the fifth most cited barrier and incentives solutions relate to: the provision of more bi-lingual officers; greater use of literature in other languages; and greater use of BME workers.

The complexity of the assistance process is the sixth most commonly cited barrier and solutions suggested include: simplifying schemes and the application process; and mail out campaigns attached to the benefits system.

The seventh and final, commonly cited barrier relates to ineffective targeting of people at risk of fuel poverty, with solutions including: more face-to-face calls; and more informed advisors and comprehensive information provision.

6.5 Detailed feedback on questionnaire results

Although the desk based study involving stakeholder organisations formed a minor part of the research, the questionnaire results and comments from a number of respondent organisations suggested it would be worthwhile to revisit the questionnaire results and obtain more detailed feedback from several organisations if possible.

To this end a voluntary sector organisation, a primary care trust (PCT) and a representative from the Warm Front scheme manager, Eaga, kindly provided more detailed responses to the questionnaire results. These organisations only commented on those barriers/solutions identified in the results which they felt were relevant to their own experiences.

An exploration of where the stakeholders and PA/RA respondents' perceptions agreed and where they differed appears in section 7.

6.5.1 Primary care trust feedback

The seven main issues reflecting the range of barriers identified from the questionnaire results were felt by the PCT to reflect quite well their perception of the situation.

In relation to the first issue, 'the reticence of householders to engage', it was suggested this was something health and social care organisations could help in tackling. Community workers, health workers and nurses have a level of trust that could be used to help people gain trust in the assistance process and encourage the take up of help. More generally the PCT suggested that ordinary people, but also including some health care workers, have not necessarily made the link between housing conditions such as dampness, and health, also that there is a lack of awareness of fuel poverty issues within the health care profession.

One of the other main issues to be aware of when involving health care professionals is their heavy workload. Fuel poverty issues should become as mainstream as possible for example by asking suitably framed questions on fuel poverty in the 'Standard Assessment' documentation – a single assessment process used in social care and soon to be rolled out to health as well. This assessment would be ideally suited for the incorporation of some fuel poverty questions; however the time constraints on the overall process are again a major consideration.

Another key comment relates to the involvement of health care professionals after the referral stage; the PCT commented that it would be a very good incentive to involvement in the overall process for health care professionals to receive a general follow up of the results of referrals, such as the provision of summary feedback on a quarterly basis. In the past, health care professionals' involvement has perhaps not been sufficiently sustained as they have had no feedback as to the outcome or worth of their efforts.

A table of comments on barriers and solutions identified during interview is attached at appendix F.

6.5.2 Warm Front scheme manager – frontline staff feedback

There is general agreement with the main issues representing the range of barriers identified in the questionnaires, apart from the issue concerned with 'targeting' of vulnerable groups.

The respondent felt that 'partnership working between and within organisations' is the most important of the issues identified. For example, the excess situation can cause problems as the Warm Front grant occasionally doesn't cover the price of the job and local authorities are asked to pay; this can cause tensions and perhaps is a double edged sword as it can sometimes prohibit more effective partnership working. Although many local authorities do find a financial mechanism to overcome excesses, the issue

can be a regular bone of contention that can be detrimental to the ongoing momentum of the referral generation process. One example relates to an oil installation in an off-gas area in Ryedale, North Yorkshire, where a grant needed to be topped up. The local authority said it was reluctant to top up the grant on this occasion as they were worried oil central heating may actually exacerbate the potential for fuel poverty. Unusually, the respondent understands Ryedale preferred to fund a multi-fuel stove rather than pay the Warm Front oil excess on the basis that the former was less expensive for the client to run.

It was highlighted that the Local Government Act 2001 indicates that local authority benefits data can be used at a local level for improving the social, environmental and economic well being of a local area. After conducting a successful round of benefit mailings in partnership with all local authorities across North Yorkshire the respondent considered and questioned the limitations placed on the use of similar DWP data (eg Pension Credit) and the exchange of data as such between organisations such as Defra, DWP and Eaga for the purposes of improving the ‘targeting’ of qualifying customers.

The respondent mentioned that occasionally there seems to be a negative perception amongst some localised gatekeepers and stakeholders concerning the overall scale of the challenge of the national Warm Front scheme and its overall success in terms of effective delivery. This is because sometimes the odd costly, faulty or untimely individual case can restrict a more proactive approach to generating new referrals and more effective partnership working with Eaga and Warm Front.

It is also important to recognise that voluntary organisations and Primary Care Trusts are being asked by a wide range of organisations to identify vulnerable clients and bolt on additional services (e.g. energy advice) to those already provided. Voluntary groups and Primary Care Trusts may be limited in the amount of help they can provide when working with the energy efficiency / fuel poverty sector and other agencies because of the numerous additional services they are asked to provide.

In terms of barriers to uptake, when one considers the marketing resources used to try and reach vulnerable people and the way it’s done across lots of different sectors and organisations (including the energy sector), an overload of information might put some potential clients off applying for a grant. In future some of those marketing resources could perhaps be used effectively on a national/regional/local public information initiative combined with strategically planned local authority benefit mailings, using data supplied by DWP and coordinated by Eaga’s Warm Front network team. Ideally sub-regional public information TV and/or radio broadcasts supported by personalised benefit mailings conducted on a local authority-by-local authority basis may encourage more people to apply. Mass mailing techniques are currently used to communicate the Warm Front message but some of the resources needed to do this may occasionally be used to remind the same responsive and/or non-responsive customers of the same message. Some potential customers may be turned off by the amount of so called junk or

unsolicited mail coming through their doors and this may also have an impact on Warm Front grant uptake.

In terms of harder to reach clients and harder to treat properties, another idea may be to combine effective benefit mailings with a quality-led, door-to-door, area-based approach where well-trained surveyors have plenty of time to engage with and explain things on a one-to-one basis with a potentially vulnerable client.

Branding is also important. For example door-to-door surveyors in the energy efficiency sector could be given a local authority branding to encourage more trust via recognised door-to-door techniques with appropriate photo and password security.

The respondent acknowledged that human factors affecting the uptake of Warm Front grants at the individual/property/household level are as diverse and challenging as they are at stakeholder level.

A table of comments on barriers and solutions identified during interview is attached at Appendix G.

6.5.3 Voluntary organisation feedback

Middlesbrough Environment City (MEC) is a voluntary organisation involved in the alleviation of fuel poverty amongst other environmental sustainability projects in Middlesbrough. MEC were particularly interested and involved in this research project and were in broad agreement with the overall rankings. They feel Middlesbrough has good partnership workings generally but also that there was scope to develop better linkages with non-preferred installers in the area servicing the mainly able to pay market.

MEC felt that an overall a commitment to resourcing is necessary for effective partner working as adding extra work to someone's existing job duties often means the commitment does not translate into action.

A table of comments on barriers and solutions identified during interview is attached at Appendix H.

7 Barriers and possible solutions to take-up of fuel poverty alleviation measures

This section outlines the barriers and possible solutions identified by the research. The research investigated both 'real' and 'perceived' barriers, however in reality either type of barrier will prevent take-up. The focus throughout the research was on hard to reach clients. It must be noted that while the experience of frontline staff may appear contrary to some of the findings presented here, the work was carried out with potential clients for whom the usual methods of contact are inappropriate. For example in the experience of frontline staff the door to door calling method has a high success rate. While this is true for the majority of clients the groups who were the focus of the research generally stated that they did not like people calling at the door for any reason. This was not, as has been suggested, due to some confusion on the potential clients' part between people calling at the door asking them to switch suppliers and those offering schemes such as Warm Front. They were very clear that they didn't welcome callers at the door per se. Appropriateness of approach to given communities is not a one size fits all. Therefore where solutions and recommendations talk about adopting an appropriate method a case by case approach will have to be developed in partnership with representatives from the community and relevant stakeholders working on the ground with the community.

7.1 Awareness

This is the most common problem identified in the community based appraisal and is high on the list of issues identified by frontline organisations. There is a plethora of confusing literature and information and, while participants in the community appraisal identified a need for information, this was tempered with comments on there being too much information and that it can be confusing. The research identifies the key to useful information as clarity, appropriate, convenient and trustworthy. Different audiences respond more favourably to different types of information and careful targeting is necessary. "All information in one leaflet" was a popular suggestion, as were: "letter from the government", "official letter", "T.V. programme" and "advertisement in papers".

7.2 Partnership working

Partnership working has a direct impact on the issue of awareness. The more disjointed approaches and agencies there are carrying out work on alleviating fuel poverty, the more this leads to a wider range of schemes and confusion over eligibility and appropriateness. The community appraisal identified the many types of schemes and different eligibility criteria as a barrier to take-up. Better partnership working would allow the different agencies to get across a single message in a more concise manner and more effectively target different audiences with the appropriate method of information delivery.

7.3 Trust

Responses from the community mentioning concerns about callers being “bogus” and “not at door” are clear indications that trust is an issue. This is further seen in comments about letters addressed to the occupier and leaflets. The reticence of householders to engage, as cited by frontline staff, is in part indicative of the issue of trust. The solution to this is, as with the information, a targeted approach matching client needs with approach. Suggestions include: home visits, client champions, referral from other agencies already trusted by the client, visits to clubs/organisations etc. that potential beneficiaries attend, recommendation from family members, and letting people in an area know that other people have had work done by the scheme.

7.4 Eligibility

Community appraisal participants frequently stated that they thought they weren't eligible, stating common myths such as “don't claim benefit so not entitled”, “on pension so can't get anything”, and “usually over 60's get it”. Frontline staff note that the complexity of grant eligibility is a barrier. Related to this is the complexity of the assistance process. There is a need to clearly inform would be beneficiaries of the eligibility criteria and to simplify processes as much as possible. This may also be enhanced through partnership working.

7.5 Property and tenure type

Not all properties lend themselves to insulation schemes, the most obvious being mobile homes, solid walled properties and flats. Extending the remit of the schemes to include double glazing would begin to change this, although there is a funding issue. This said most schemes offering insulation also offer other measures that could be suitable to a property and when the household is assessed for intervention they are assessed for all the measures available. This needs to be stressed when publicising schemes.

Tenure type is perhaps more complex. A number of participants in the community appraisal stated that they lived in situations where the control over the energy efficiency of their homes was beyond their control. Typically these include:

- Living in a hostel
- Living where there is a communal heating system and fixed charge for heating
- Living with relatives
- Private landlord
- Living in a home owned by another relative (e.g. son owns house but lives in a different house)

Again the schemes could be extended to cover such situations. Indeed private renters are eligible under some schemes but difficulty can arise in obtaining permission from private landlords for the works to go ahead.

7.6 Pride

It is often stated by frontline staff that people are too proud to accept help. The community appraisal responses refuted this to a large extent. Only one of the PA/RA participants stated they were “too proud to accept free help” and when this statement was fed back during the verification process only 4 from a possible 73 agreed with the statement while 27 disagreed with it. While this is the case for a minority, it is possibly counter productive for staff to have this in mind while making contact with possible beneficiaries. It may be better to take the message on board that the schemes are “well worth having” (27 agree, 1 disagree) “would if free and no mess or even pay half” (7 agree, 3 disagree), “good grant” (9 agree, 1 disagree). 23 respondents agreed that “save money is an attraction”, 16 agreed with “would if thought it would save money”, and 6 agreed with “on benefit and will take any help I can” (there were no participants disagreeing with any of these statements). These positive messages from the community can be used in information and promotion literature.

7.7 Information

The section on awareness dealt with some of this issue but it also relates to an educative process. There are a number of misconceptions about cavity walls such as “will cause condensation”, and “will mess around with walls”. An information/education campaign would go a long way to increase awareness of the benefits of such measures. Participants stated that they were in favour of T.V advertisements so perhaps some sort of Public Service Announcement would be a good idea to help dispel this myth, possibly using some real beneficiaries to make positive comments about the insulation.

Language barriers have been identified and more information in relevant languages needs to be targeted to relevant communities.

8 Recommendations

To more effectively target the hard to reach clients that were the main focus of this investigation the following recommendations have been developed from the results of the research.

Develop clear concise information. This should be area based and be developed in partnership with all the agencies operating in a specific area in order not to inundate potential clients with an information overload. Agencies include; PCT, fuel poverty agencies, welfare agencies, and any other relevant agency dealing with vulnerable people.

Once the information is collated an advertising scheme should be developed with different strategies and formats targeting different groups. This should be based on demographic information about the area which will give an indication of the audience and how to target the different sections of the population. Official letters personally addressed were a popular option for contacting potential clients from the hard to reach groups.

A general information campaign in the media with a clear message from a trusted source about schemes and, in particular, the wide range of eligibility criteria will help dispel the misconceptions around who is entitled to assistance.

The portrayal of potential clients must be handled carefully. Particular attention should be paid to the use of language and narrow stereotyping of potential clients, especially those from the vulnerable groups. For example, using the term 'fuel poverty' is not immediately meaningful to many people; some may not even be aware that they are experiencing such a thing, they will only be aware that fuel is expensive. Indeed as most people are likely to be managing to pay their bill in some way, it will not seem relevant to them. Many of the participants in the research were very active people and did not regard themselves as 'older' and any advertising/publicity marketed in a way to target older people will not have struck a chord with them. The marketing of fuel poverty alleviation measures must be done in plain language and avoid stereotypical depiction of potential clients. Using actual beneficiaries of schemes in publicity and involving them in the production of the wording used will go a long way to addressing this problem.

Directly related to stereotyping of client groups and less than relevant language (as outlined above) are the assumptions of the frontline staff. Two of these assumptions are worthy of note: people are too proud to accept help; and door to door calling is the most effective method of engagement. In the first instance, by assuming that people are too proud to accept help, frontline staff can miss or misinterpret important cues from the client. Holding this view can close staff off to a more detailed conversation that may lead to the client taking up the measures. In the case of door to door calling, it is certainly true that for the majority of clients this is the most effective method of marketing. However, it must be remembered that for the groups targeted in the research this was not generally the case.

Work with agencies that already have a good relationship with the community. This is especially important when trying to reach the more difficult to engage clients. For many older people and Ethnic Minority people trust is a big issue and by building working links with well established agencies in the area the trust is built up.

A wide range of tenure types can benefit from schemes but there is a poor awareness of this, therefore it is timely to publicise in a targeted manner. In the case of private landlords it may be useful to specifically target them with the positive message that allowing tenants to benefit from schemes they also benefit in the long run as it will make their property more desirable. Possibly a campaign mounted in partnership with the Landlords Association would be beneficial.

9 Conclusion

During the research just over half of the participants had heard of schemes to provide free or reduced cost cavity wall insulation, loft insulation, and heating systems. However the research was primarily to investigate the reasons for not taking up the schemes and the examination of the findings focussed on those who had not taken up the schemes and those who had not heard of them.

The main issues identified for not taking up schemes were poor information and an inappropriate method of contacting potential clients.

The focus throughout the research was on hard to reach clients. It must be noted that while the experience of frontline staff may appear contrary to some of the findings presented here, the work was carried out with potential clients for whom the usual methods of contact are inappropriate. For example, the door to door calling method has a high success rate. While this is true for the majority of clients, the groups who were the focus of the research generally stated that they did not like people calling at the door for any reason. This was not, as has been suggested, due to some confusion on the potential clients part between people calling at the door asking them to switch suppliers and those offering schemes such as Warm Front. They were very clear that they didn't welcome callers at the door per se.

In applying the recommendations developed in this report, agencies offering fuel poverty alleviation measures must bear in mind that the findings relate to the hard to reach groups and that generally the methods they are currently employing are effective for the majority.

Appendices

Appendix A: Rapid Appraisal Questionnaire

In your home which fuel do you use for:

Cooking

Heating

Do you have energy saving light bulbs?

Do you use more fuel in the winter?

How do you stay warm in the winter? (Is there anything else you do during cold spells to stay warm?)

Are your winter fuel bills high?

Do you plan ahead to pay winter fuel bills?

There are a number of schemes that provide free or reduced cost insulation, heating improvements, and advice to a number of people.

Have you heard of any?

Would you use any?

Are there any problems with these schemes?

Is there anything that would make you more likely to use these schemes?

Male

Female

Age group

16 – 25

26 – 50

51 – 65

66 +

How would you describe your ethnicity?

Appendix B: Community appraisal area results

Richmond and Hambleton

25 RA respondents

Gender

21 female

4 male

Age group

16 – 25: 0

26 – 50: 0

51 – 65: 1

66+: 24

Ethnicity

British: 2

English: 1

Londoner: 1

Very English: 1

White: 3

White British: 16

Yorkshire: 1

Heard of Scheme

No response: 2

Not heard of: 16 “no haven’t”, “no havent but they promise all sorts”, “not aware of help with improving heating systems, paid for it self”.

6 had heard of them: “yes but council bungalow so they would deal with these things”, “yes heard of them”, “know about them”.

1 said “council property”.

Would you use a scheme?

No response: 3

10 said no: “no don’t like to change”, “no fully insulated” X6.

1 said “no to light bulbs. Council property”

1 said “Council fitted c/h and double glazing”

1 stated “get plenty help”

9 said yes “yes I would”, “yes if daughter thought it was good idea”, “yes with stay warm”, “yes I have thought about getting cavity wall insulation, I have loft installation. I am tied with my executors though and need permission from them”.

Problems with schemes

No response: 10

11 said there was no problem with the schemes.

1 said “don’t think so”

3 said there were problems: “no wouldn’t want anyone coming to door, would prefer a letter”, “not at door”, “not sure about people at door”.

How to improve schemes

No response: 7

8 said a letter was best “letters/leaflets”, “not at doorstep. Would look at post if it was an official letter”, “prefer letter”.

2 said there was no way to improve the schemes.

1 said “no don’t understand what I would be getting into”

1 said “not really as said, its councils so not up to me”

1 said “already am”

5 said “no fully insulated”

Other comments

21 respondents made no other comment

got new combi-boiler paid for it herself
Heard of free insulation through post and is going to take it up
lives with daughter who takes care of the household so has no interest in day to day running
lives with daughter who takes care of the household so has no interest in day to day running

Pa responses

Energy use in the house

Location	Dales Centre Bedale, Hambleton and Richmondshire	Male 11	Female 24
Energy saving lightbulbs?	Heating	Cooking	Other
	Boilers heard of – not thought much about it		
	Gas 11		
	Oil 1		
	Gas and electric 1		
	Coal Fire 1		
5 esb – 4 lower use areas	Electric 4		
4 could do with		Electric 13	
		Gas 3	Not as good a light as normal bulb
			Dull – alright when get going
		Gas 2	
		Electric 15	
2 all esb for environment			
3 have half esbs	Not aware of help		

to save money	for boilers/CH 4		
3 got some installed – good last a long time			
2 no esb			
	Gas c/h 5		
	Gas fires 4		
	Electric C/h 1		
	Oil C/H 1		
	2 open fire		
	1 electric fire		
Location	St Johns Centre, Catterick	Male 7	Female 8
Energy saving lightbulbs?	Heating	Cooking	Other
		Electric 7	
		Gas4	
		Gas/electric 2	
Lighting 3 but noisy and not very bright			
	Flue heating		
	Electric heater		
	Gas		
	Electric		

Cavity wall insulation

Location	Dales Centre Bedale, Hambleton and Richmondshire		Participants	Male 11	Female 24
Scheme			Insulation		
Good	Bad	Other	Good	Bad	Other
Good scheme leaflet					
Good to contact					
Heard of grants					
Association does it					
Worthwhile					
Well worth having					

Housing association did it					
	84 years old and too old to think about it				
	Cant be bothered				
	Not sure because of air circulation				
		Don't really look at it 1			
		Look at it a bit 1			
		Not aware 2			
		Aware but don't need it 1			
		1 got help with double glazing			
					2 already have
				Doesn't think would make a difference and too old to pay out – no point. If someone would pay would get it done	1 solid walls 1 not installed
				1 had it though it caused chest problems	
		3 had			

		leaflets but either don't need it or don't think can get help			
	1 thinks not worth the hassle at this age				
1 would if free and no mess or even pay half					
2 would if thought would save money					
			1 happy		
					2 just haven't got round and chance of upheaval
2 don't know whats available					
	1 too proud to accept free help				
				1 not bothered about mess	
1 ok with people to door as long as credentials					
		2 in council houses – 1 wouldn't be interested			

		if it works ok, 1 not interested as don't want to be pestered and all right at the moment.			

Location	St Johns Centre, Catterick		Participants	Male 7	Female 8
Scheme			Insulation		
Good	Bad	Other	Good	Bad	Other
Cut down on condensation					
New bungalow and before insulation things in wardrobe moulding – now they aren't					

Annual energy use in the home

Location	Dales Centre Bedale, Hambleton and Richmondshire	Male 11	Female 24
Months	Usage	Payment	Other
Jan	Buy more coal winter, save during summer		
Feb			
Mar		Put away each week then pay as come in 2	
Apr		2 pay when bills come in monthly	
May			
Jun			

Jul			
Aug			
Sep			
Oct		Quarterly as come in 8	
Nov		Good way fixed monthly DD 6	
Dec		Fuel allowance helps out	

Location	St Johns Centre, Catterick	Male 7	Female 8
Months	Usage	Payment	Other
Jan		Fixed monthly payment 4	
Feb		Fixed fortnight payment 1	
Mar		Pay as come in 2	
Apr			Changed suppliers good
May			
Jun			
Jul			
Aug			
Sep			
Oct			
Nov			
Dec			

Loft insulation

Location	Dales Centre Bedale, Hambleton and Richmondshire		Participants	Male 11	Female 24
Scheme			Insulation		
Good	Bad	Other	Good	Bad	Other
'Coming to do it' leaflet good			2 variable depth – always changing		
On benefit and will take any help I can					
Housing association					
	Taking help can be a loss of				

	independence but have to be sensible about it				
	2 Already done and paid for				
	5 Bumpf through post too much				
			3 have put it in and no problems as family helped but if no family then would be		
	3 no help as not aware				
		2 double glazing			

Location	St Johns Centre, Catterick		Participants	Male 7	Female 8
Scheme			Insulation		
Good	Bad	Other	Good	Bad	Other
			Warmer		
Nothing to pay					
Stay warm –govt letter					
		Other suppliers don't bother you at the door			
Knocked on door					

	Costs still rising				
					3 through council
					1 housing

Middlesbrough

34 RA respondents

Gender

33 female

1 male

Age group

16 – 25: 0

26 – 50: 6

51 – 65: 4

66+ : 24

Ethnicity

Irish: 1

White British: 33

Heard of scheme

10 had not heard of any schemes: “no” X9, “not heard”.

24 had heard of schemes: “co-op living”, “Stay Warm and Council,” X2, “Stay Warm and Warmfront” X3, “voucher to replace parts on fire, - Warmfront”, “Warmfront” X2, “Warmfront/Staywarm” X2, “yes council scheme”, “yes, cavity wall check”, “Yes, Npower, cavity wall and loft insulation”.

Would you use a scheme?

No response: 2

4 said definitely no: “no cos always worked and principles against but husband would”.

3 weren’t eligible: “not eligible”, “not entitled”, “Don’t think I’d be eligible, yes in principle”.

1 said “would want more info, would want son and daughter”

2 said “yes, council did it all”, “yes had loft insulation, council did cavity wall and on new scheme with council for new boiler and C/H”.

1 said “done but not with schemes”

1 said “live with mam”

1 said “cavity wall, loft insulation”

19 said yes: “Yes, warmfront - Warmzone did loft cavity”, “yes in principle” X2, “Yes but haven’t yet”, “yes - have done for insulation, locks and windows”.

Problems with schemes

No response: 13

11 said there were no problems with the schemes: “no (think someone got in touch) very good, very quick”, “not that I know of”.

1 said "door visit ok"

9 said there were problems with the schemes: "When come to do insulation - weren't careful of house and carpets and didn't respect my privacy", "Time consuming working and fitting, in finding out, applying etc", "not door", "no-door bad, leaflets bad, phone bad", "doorstep - wont answer", "don't seem to be entitled but have a cavity wall - tried if entitled but all schemes seem not for us", "awkward fitting in with lifestyle - hassle arranging around volunteer work and lifestyle. Leave cards to say let the schemes know if you cant make it but too much hassle", "18 months ago put in for it - looked at fire. Warmfront said could have grant for 2700 but Blue Flag contractor said would cost extra 1600 so refused to get work done".

How to improve schemes

No response: 13

The following responses were given:

Advisor centrally to talk through schemes
clear letter with who is coming and know lots
don't read leaflets, suspicious of door knockers, prefer official letters
found out through son
heard through Staying Put
If I could pick and choose specific day for talking to someone and for getting them fitted.
ignore door knocking, leaflets, more likely to act on official letters
ignore door knocking, leaflets, more likely to act on official letters
letter
Letter/ no junk leaflets or mail, no door calling
more interested in an official letter -trust more, no interest in leaflets, no door calling
more official letter from council/govt
no
nurse filled in form and informed
official letters/official leaflet LA or Govt, no door knocking
Pay more attention to official letter from council - would not listen to anyone coming to door - throw flyers and leaflets away
prefer official council/govt letter - leaflets would read but probably not act.
prefer official letters
prefer official letters
Quote needed to pay 150 pounds - not included in voucher - labour and vat - reduces value of voucher. Valid for 3 month - could be problem when looking for quote
take more notice of official letter from council

The following is a summary of the responses:

Official letters were popular with 14 respondents stating that they would take more notice of these.

7 would throw away leaflets although 2 did state that they read them but not trust them.

5 did not like cold calling at the door

5 preferred the personal touch

Other comments

None of the respondents had any other comments to make

Birmingham

93 RA respondents

Gender

50 female

43 male

Age group

16 – 25: 3

26 – 50: 13

51 – 65: 13

66+: 64

Ethnicity

Afro- Caribbean: 1

Asian: 8

British: 23

Brummie: 3

Brummie British: 1

Brummie/west Indian: 1

Caribbean: 1

English: 33

Indian: 3

Irish: 9

Irish origin: 1

Northern Irish: 1

Pakistani: 2

West Indian: 2

White English: 4

Heard of Scheme

No response: 9

No: 22 (qualified responses include; "no. on pension so can't get anything", "not aware at all", "not aware but already insulated etc.", "not heard anything")

Unsure: 1

Yes: 55 (qualified responses include: "yes loft and wall warmzone", "yes, loft X2, "yes. Took em up", "yes. Cavity wall done on grant 'warmheat'", "yes heard about in papers. No caller or letter", "yes (easy pay)", "took up thing".)

Vague responses or those not relating to schemes: 6 ("all done via housing trust", "given loft insulation", "house built 1967 so felt couldn't qualify", "lady came and never saw her again" X2, "loft done by council".)

Would you use a scheme?

No response: 16

Yes: 54 (qualified responses include; "yes but felt the callers about cavity wall were bogus", "yes. Have", "yes but not entitled because son owns the house", "yes if offered", "yes used energy something", "yes but not heard of any that are suitable" X2, "yes. Had loft", "had loft done" X2, "had grant for loft", "did", "did use".) 14 of these had used a scheme.

No: 15 (qualified responses include; “no because wouldn't qualify”, “no. don't think eligible”, “no. live in council house”, “no. already insulated etc so don't need them” X2, “no. already insulated etc so don't need them” X2, “think not eligible”, “no need”.)

8 unsure/vague responses include; “would but feels not for him”, “no problems with insulation”, “feels has enough insulation”, “don't think it makes much difference”, “doubt it”, “probably”, “would but already insulated, “think not eligible”.

Problems with schemes

No response: 42

No problems: 20 (qualified responses include; “no. good. Very smooth”, “no problems” X2)

Very positive answers: 4 (“fine”, “good workmen” X3)

1 vague answer: “got a letter to ask if needed it. Ok”

Negative responses: 22 (“bad reputation of listed engineers”, “cavity wall will mess round with walls. Old houses so don't think it will be any good. High ceiling so probably no good”, “couldn't choose where to have radiators”, “had a visit but no return visit”, “not keen on cavity wall insulation, built that way for a reason, might let damp in”, “pipe scored porch and caused £250 damage, no one fixed it”, “some mess left by workmen”, “Warmair. Got leaflet, rang number, couldn't get through for more information”)

Of the 22 there were 14 responses relating to a lack of information (“not heard of any”, “not enough leaflets. Hard information”, “not enough information. Unaware of scheme”, “not enough information about schemes” X2, “not aware”, “no information, feels not eligible”, “no information about them” X4, “no information”, “don't hear about them”.)

3 stated “yes” but did not give any details about the problems.

1 answered “don't know”

How to improve schemes

No responses: 65

5 responded “no” that there is no way to improve the schemes

14 responded that information would be an improvement. Of these 3 said “information”, “more information” X 10, “publicity”.

7 other responses included: “to choose where to put radiators”, “shorten time gap.”, “save money is an attraction. Clear information. Put it in council house office, job centres, leaflet all houses. Put all information in one leaflet” X2, “no use to them as council” X2, “no bills”.

2 other responses were: “you do”, “took up scheme”.

Other comments

64 respondents made no other comment.

30 year old house all done
also received low energy bulbs
been in hospital and home. Moving to a bungalow
can get grant for gas but have no gas supply. Had same boiler for 15yrs if condemned would there be grant

for new system?
can get grant for gas but have no gas supply. Had same boiler for 15yrs if condemned would there be grant for new system?
council informed by door calling. Also have combi boiler fitted
council provided double glazing. The workers were good
did all that ourselves
Doesn't think there is a problem with people accepting help its just that not a lot of people have heard of them
feels would not be eligible for any of the schemes
felt not eligible
front door is draughty
got leaflet through door
had heaters and loft insulation put in 3 years ago
had loft done
heard of winter warm - council run scheme
husband is 90
insulation, walls and double glazing all done in 3 -4 streets done by council
insulation, walls and double glazing all done in 3 -4 streets done by council
lives in a hostel where heat is in with rent
lives in flat
lives in house but it is owned by son, though he doesn't live there
paid for own double glazing
Scottish power subsidised loft insulation
suspicious about advertisements that's come through the door
There are just the two of them and they are ok
told gas company to cut it off 12yrs ago. Trying to get electric board to inspect old wiring. Lives at brothers in winter
was insulated 10 yrs ago, its good. Not interested in anymore
would be prepared to put up with upheaval if could choose where to have radiators

Pa responses

Loft insulation (good and bad points about loft insulation and the schemes that provide it)

Location	Heath Road Asian Centre		Participants	Male 15	Female
Scheme NPower					
Good	Bad	Other	Good	Bad	Other
Houses now improved so no need for extra blankets					

Energy use in the house (looking at type of fuel for cooking and heating, also types of lighting)

Location	Heath Road Asian	Male 15	Female
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	Drop in Centre		
Energy saving lightbulbs?	Heating	Cooking	Other
15 happy with light and durability but cant find higher wattage bulbs – do they exist	Gas Central Heating – Schemes for improved boilers		

Somerset and Taunton

59 RA respondents

Gender

43 female

16 male

Age group

16 – 25: 0

26 – 50: 5

51 – 65: 7

66+: 47

Ethnicity

No response: 2

20: British

1: Devonshire/English

27: English

1: English born and bred

1: English out and out

1: English rose

1: English/local Somerset

2: Londoner

2: Scottish

1: Welsh

Heard of Scheme

No response: 3

No: 25 (“No. Thinks house insulated”, “no. Usually over 60's get it”, “not aware” X2, “not aware. Feels not eligible”, “not heard anything”.)

1 responded “slightly aware”

26 said yes they had heard of schemes (“yes but old house with no access to loft”, “Yes. Applied to have cavity wall done but house too old (early Victorian)”, “yes. Heard from family member”, “yes. Heard on tv programme. Fuel reduction programme by gas and electric companies”, “yes. Not sure applicable to me”, “Yes. walls and loft insulated”.)

1 said "yes. Done by council"

3 other responses were: "council bungalows", "Housing association has arranged for insulation to be put in this winter", "live in sheltered accommodation".

Would you use a scheme?

No response: 8

15 wouldn't use a scheme (4 of these lived in council property, "couldn't because of house", "don't need any", "don't need them", "don't think would be eligible", "Feels not eligible", "got insulation", "live in a new house", "no not now, can't be bothered. Probably couldn't afford it", "no. just live downstairs", "not interested" X2.)

7 were unsure: "might", "not sure", "possibly", "possibly. House not fully insulated", "possibly. Thought about solar panels. Not sure about cavity wall", "probably not as in mobile home" X2.

3 had used schemes and said: "did", "sorted out", "used loft and cavity".

23 said yes: "yes but live in hostel", "yes but problems with the house", "yes if eligible" X2, "yes did" X3, "yes. Got loft insulation bought it myself", "yes. Rang number", "yes. Returned the form that came through the post"

1 respondent stated that the council had done it

2 stated that it was not applicable

Problems with schemes

No response: 28

8 said there were no problems with the schemes: "good work" X2, "good. Smooth", "no but I was just above the limit", "no problems. No mess", "no. Fine workmen".

2 were unsure: "probably not applicable to situation", "don't think eligible

1 respondent stated "no access to loft and unable to provide repairs if knock hole in ceiling to access loft".

1 stated "Warmfront tried to insulate a non cavity wall and left a mess".

1 said "not sure about cavity wall".

18 were either unaware or felt there was not enough information: "no information" X 6, "no information about them" X3, "not aware", "not enough information" X2, "not enough information in leaflets to outline entitlement" X2, "not heard" X2, "not heard of them", "yes, information".

How to improve schemes

No response: 46

8 were unaware or needed more information: "unaware", "information" X7

2 said "being told about the schemes face to face. Need more help as disabled. Would talk to someone who knocked on the door".

2 respondents thought there was no way to improve the schemes: "no", "nothing".

1 said "don't need any"

Other comments

44 respondents made no other comments

council
had bad experience with billing. Don't get bill every 1/4 then when paid they say I haven't and

threaten to send bailiffs
House is 300 yr old and very cold and draughty. No loft access hatch
insulated years ago
Lives in a flat. Damp
Lives in a mobile home
lives in council property and has no loft
lives in small flat
lives with son so not really involved with the running of the household
people think they are going to ask questions about income
people think they are going to ask questions about income
sheltered accommodation flat
sheltered accommodation flat
thinks probably won't be eligible for schemes
will get daughter to follow up on the information in the leaflet

PA responses

Annual energy use

Location	Bishops Lydeard Day Centre	Male 0	Female 7
Months	Usage	Payment	Other
Jan	More gas and electric Oct to Mar		Use tumble dryer Oct to Mar
Feb			
Mar			
Apr	Twice a day heat April May Gas fire boost April May		
May			
Jun	Heat off Jun - Sept		Each room has an individual electric heater
Jul			
Aug			
Sep			
Oct			
Nov			
Dec			

Loft insulation

Location	Bishops Lydeard Day Centre	Participants	Male 0	Female 7
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Scheme			Insulation 4 got it 2 from council		
Good	Bad	Other	Good	Bad	Other
			Ready to roll from B & Q		
Good grant					
			Felt difference		
Poss form through post					

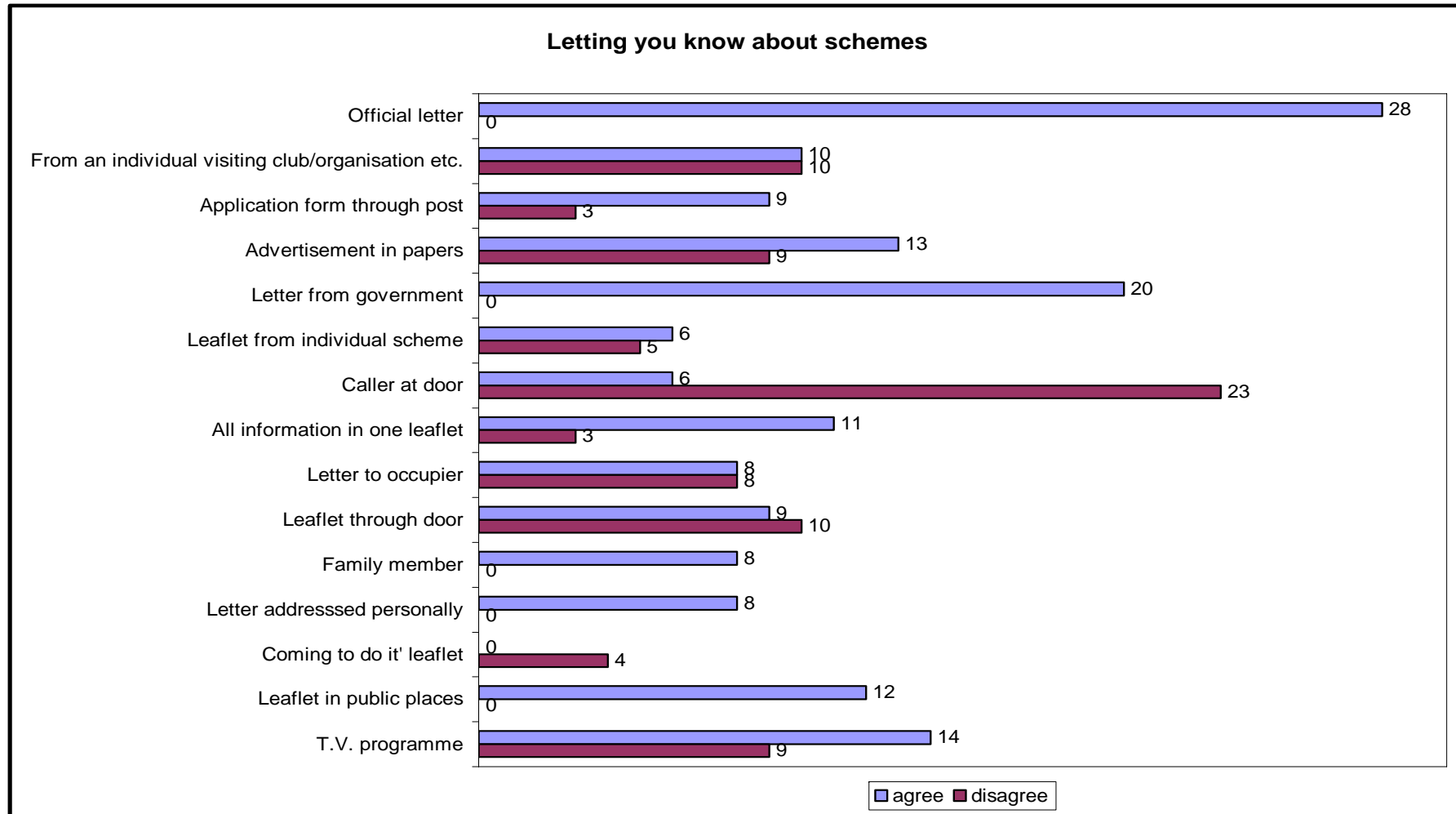
Cavity wall insulation

Location	Bishops Lydeard Day Centre		Participants	Male 0	Female 7
Scheme			Insulation		
Good	Bad	Other	Good	Bad	Other
Advertised in paper council assisted			Felt difference – only short time heat where would have had it on all time		
			One day		

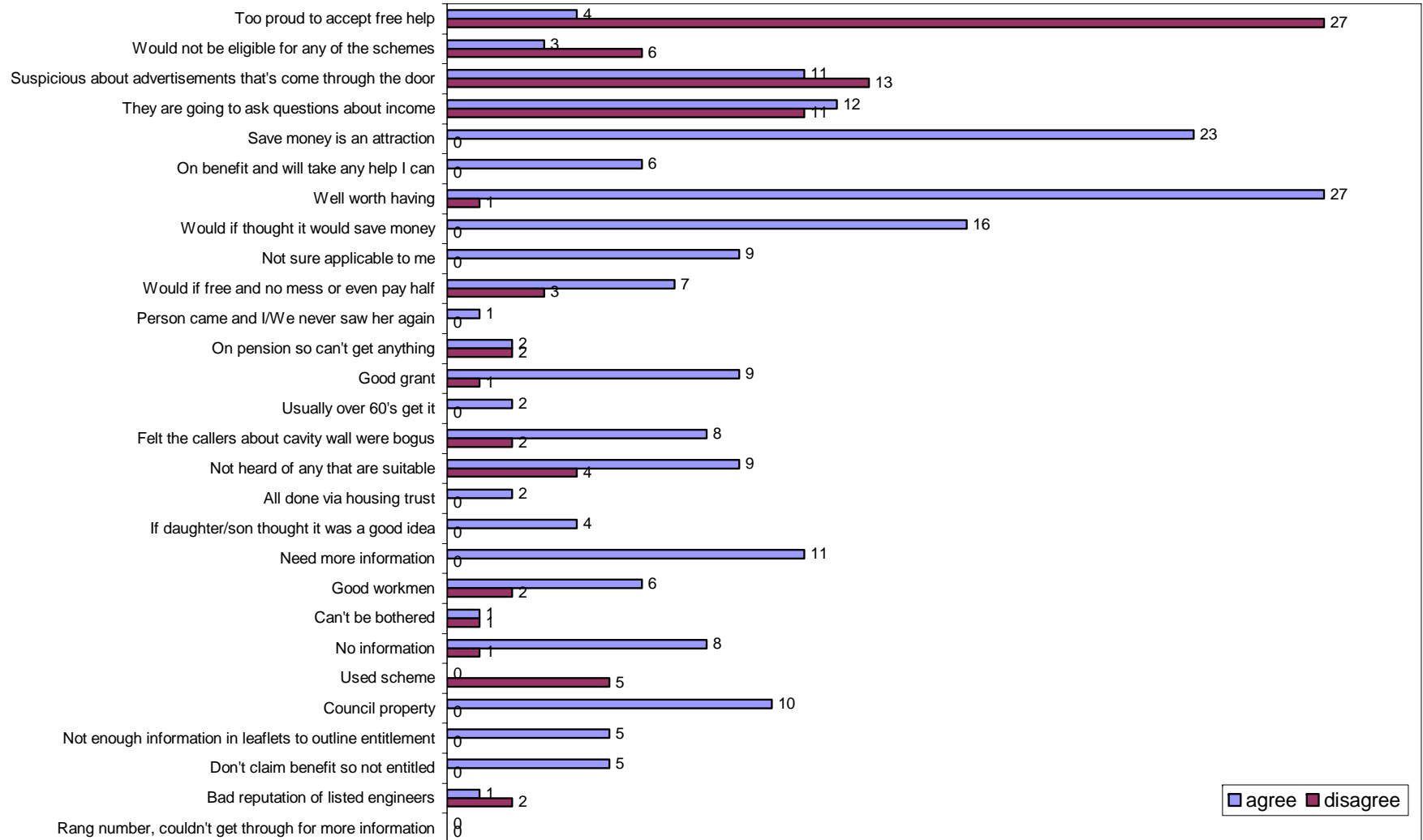
Energy use in the house

Location	Bishops Lydeard Day Centre	Male 0	Female 7
Energy saving lightbulbs?	Heating	Cooking	Other
0	Economy 7		
3	Electric C/H		
In kitchen (free)	Gas		
0	C/H – fire not working		
	Gas C/H		
	Economy 7		Electric everything
	Economy 7		
3			Ok but take long time to warm up and no good for landings
Energy Bulbs	Oil C/H	Electric	

Appendix C: Verification charts



What people have said about schemes



Appendix D: Desk based questionnaire

Fuel Poverty Questionnaire (Please mark N/A any questions that may not be relevant)

1. What does your organisation understand by the terms 'Fuel Poverty'?
2. Please complete *Table A* as far as possible.

Table A: Barriers/Incentives/Solutions in Relation to Uptake of Fuel Poverty Alleviation Measures

What barriers to the acceptance of fuel poverty help for vulnerable⁶ groups can you identify? (This may include institutional barriers)	Are you able to suggest any incentives/solutions to overcome the barrier?	How common does this kind of barrier occur? (scale of 1 to 3 with 3 being very frequent and 1 relatively infrequent)	Do you have any other relevant comments?
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(Please mark N/A any questions that may not be relevant)

3. Do the identified barriers result from direct contact with people vulnerable to fuel poverty?
4. Do you perceive any social, cultural or other group variations in the identified barriers to uptake?
4. What kind of advice or information, **if any**, do you provide or are you encouraged to provide to people vulnerable to fuel poverty?
5. If relevant does your organisation keep records of the number of people vulnerable to fuel poverty that have received advice or information and if so could you provide numbers?
6. Do you record feedback of these people to the advice/information given or is feedback evidence anecdotal?
7. Are there any other organisations not listed in Table B that we should be in touch with in relation to fuel poverty for the purposes of completing this questionnaire or organising community group meetings

⁶ Vulnerable may be taken to include groups such as the elderly, black and minority ethnic groups (BME), disabled, low income, long term sick.

Appendix E: Barriers identified from the desk based questionnaire

Issue of Concern	Barrier	Incentive/possible solution	Importance rating 1 (least) to 3(most)		
			Middlesbrough	Hambleton Richmond	Taunton
Complexity of assistance process	Grant schemes can be complicated and people lack time and understanding to complete applications	Making process easier by EEACs' completing referrals and providing simple explanations			3
	Restrictive grant schemes; Warmfront does not help everyone who is in fuel poverty and will only provide very specific help for example it wont repair radiators	Review eligibility and content of scheme			2
	A complexity of interactions between stakeholder organisations, EAGA and power companies results in over exposure of potentially vulnerable people to marketing information and is wasteful of resources and time and a serious obstacle to the take up of help. ⁷	Planned regional or sub regional mail out campaigns driven by the benefits system; people should only receive an 'official' notice once or twice a year explaining entitlement. ⁸			
Income	Fuel poverty is not always alleviated by energy efficiency	Needs a multi-agency response- more energy advice, budgeting and money advice and income maximisation measures carried out in the home	3		
	70% of Income Support levels when waiting for asylum status decision	Full benefits	3		
	Unable to afford	Benefit entitlement check	3		

Issue of Concern	Barrier	Incentive/possible solution	Importance rating 1 (least) to 3(most)		
			Middlesbrough	Hambleton Richmond	Taunton
Income (cont)	Financial	Cheaper bills, grants, increased comfort adds value to property and better health		3	
	Incentive does not help older people on no additional benefit £120 per week	Offer grant to cover all with income less that £15,000. the present restrictions are discriminatory		3	
	Unable to pay the difference beyond £2700 grant	Landlord, PCT or Council pay the difference	2		
	High Cost of Fuel	Reduced charges	2		
	£2700 incentive does not appear to reduce fuel poverty (central heating could increase bills)	Clear brochures to show that grant will reduce fuel bills		2	
	Grant does not cover full cost; no funds to bridge gap	Offer top up grants		2	
Ineffective targeting of people at risk	Not accessing the hard to reach	Face to face calls			
	Passing out leaflets in the hope that people will make an application	People need to be encouraged to fill in form on the spot, by an informed advisor, whether this be at an event, talk, exhibition	3		
Language	Lack of English language	More hours of ESOL Use a bi-lingual officer	3		
	Learning Skills Council announcing end of free ESOL for asylum seekers	Change this decision	3		
	Communication barrier, English not first language	More literature printed and made in other languages, link in with BME workers who speak English but can then disseminate information in other languages to group members			2

Issue of Concern	Barrier	Incentive/possible solution	Importance rating 1 (least) to 3(most)		
			Middlesbrough	Hambleton Richmond	Taunton
Poor awareness or understanding of householders	Surveyors and installers not giving the best advice	Once a surveyor is in a client's home they have the opportunity not only to organise insulation and heating but to advise clients about efficient use of heating, appliance and heating costs, not just - 'don't fill your kettle'. Plus signpost to other help.	3		
	Lack of access to appropriate help	Increase access to advice/help	3		
	Difficulty dealing with fuel providers	Improved customer relations	3		
	Lack of awareness of what help is available	Further promotion by advice centre, Local Authorities, grant schemes			3
	Unable to see benefits of scheme	Use facts to explain verbally	1		
	Lack of awareness	Promotional material – leaflets, websites	2		
	Difficulty understanding bills	Simpler bills – more initiatives by fuel providers	2		
	Lack of understanding of the benefits of insulation	Education and advice by EEAC, Local Authorities, grant schemes			2
	People are not necessarily in receipt of benefits that they are entitled to which are passport benefits to grant schemes	Promotion of benefit entitlement and raising awareness			2

Issue of Concern	Barrier	Incentive/possible solution	Importance rating 1 (least) to 3(most)		
			Middlesbrough	Hambleton Richmond	Taunton
Poor awareness or understanding of householders (cont)	Difficulty getting info to our hard to reach groups, especially the isolated elderly in rural areas	Make Keep Warm, Keep Well and Warmfront leaflets available via community staff (health and social care and HIA), community pharmacies and articles in parish magazines. Also piloting distribution of leaflets by coal merchants(national pilot for the Solid Fuel Association)			
	7. Poor intra and inter-organisation communication and information exchange particularly between Warmfront, Dept. Work and Pensions, and DEFRA ⁹	Develop more formalised commitment to a more streamlined process which fully exploits the potential for more effective and efficient communication and information exchange between organisations	3		
Poor Partnership Working (Between and within organisations)	Fuel poverty is not always alleviated by energy efficiency	Needs a multi-agency response- more energy advice, budgeting and money advice and income maximisation measures carried out in the home	3		

Issue of Concern	Barrier	Incentive/possible solution	Importance rating 1 (least) to 3(most)		
			Middlesbrough	Hambleton Richmond	Taunton
	No specific target for health organisations therefore may not be prioritised (though acknowledge the need to contribute to 2010 target)	Sure Start initiative: make part of health and safety initiative for children Link effect on hospital admissions and levels of chronic disease, to 'sell to staff' and raise at senior level Ensure inclusion in e.g. multi-agency housing strategies	3		
	Links not made between fuel poverty and health among health and social care professionals	Education and training for staff, senior buy-in. Integrate into assessment documentation used by staff to act as prompt (this work has begun in M'bro)	3		
	Lack of capacity in health/social care organisations to do training and release staff for training	Support from partner organisations in training e.g. EST is much appreciated. Training must be specific, brief and practical to engage and highlight relevance to health and social care professionals	3		

Issue of Concern	Barrier	Incentive/possible solution	Importance rating 1 (least) to 3(most)		
			Middlesbrough	Hambleton Richmond	Taunton
Poor Partnership Working (Between and within organisations) (cont)	Partner agencies competing for targets and referrals rather than true collaboration	Encourage shared initiatives, shared targets and systems where all can benefit (as attempted by Middlesbrough single point of contact programme, co-ordinating all efforts whilst ensuring all organisations can meet their targets	2		
	Lack of shared information/good practice across area and lack of coordination	Begun to be addressed by Middlesbrough single point of contact programme. Now being lead by Middlesbrough Council and NEA, devising an Affordable Warmth Strategy. Links needed to Fire and Home Safety initiatives to ensure sustainable and holistic approach (also more likely to be taken up by professionals as presented in co-ordinated manner)	2		
	Organisations reluctant to work together	More networking	2		
	The personal opinions of some stakeholders with regards to whether EAGA should be the Warmfront Scheme Manager or not, and associated negative objections as opposed to positive participation is a serious barrier to reaching out to vulnerable people				

Issue of Concern	Barrier	Incentive/possible solution	Importance rating 1 (least) to 3(most)		
			Middlesbrough	Hambleton Richmond	Taunton
Poor Partnership Working (Between and within organisations) (cont)	Conflict between EAGA and some stakeholder organisations wishing to charge for referrals and who won't work in positive partnerships unless they receive some payment.				
	No feedback to professionals/ not enough time to refer reduces number of referrals made.	Raise awareness among staff and simplify system. Single point of contact introduced in Middlesbrough for this reason. Quarterly feedback to be provided to referrers from EST.			
Reticence of householders to engage Reticence of householders to engage	Reluctance to speak via phone	Home visits	3		
	Refusal to deal with male officers	Use of female officer to engage with vulnerable females	3		
	Too frail or stressed to apply personally	Need someone to actually make referral and follow process through on clients behalf, and deal with delays and problems	3		
	People have so many other problems to deal with in their lives energy efficiency is not a priority.	Householders need to make the link between lower fuel bills, more money to spend on other things, warmer homes leading to better health and less worry about bills	3		
	Pride – don't want to disclose benefits			3	
	Rural areas and house types(hard to treat and location difficulties)			3	
	Fear of change for elderly	Verbal explanation	2		
Reticence of householders	Pride	Publicise widely to normalise and remove stigma e.g. annual	2		
	Age discrimination (old = poor)				

Issue of Concern	Barrier	Incentive/possible solution	Importance rating 1 (least) to 3(most)		
			Middlesbrough	Hambleton Richmond	Taunton
to engage (cont)	Suspicion of free assistance	awareness-raising/communications among staff. Champion through trusted people e.g. members of the community/ community champions and health and social care professionals. Use local community groups/ pubs/ clubs e.g. social clubs with weekly pensioner events i.e. information provision in 'non-stigmatised' places.			
	Lack of information – ability to access			2	
	Fear of someone seeing how they live and loss of their home	One to One and reassurance that other agencies will not be involved		2	
	Intrusion to the home			1	
	Reluctance to ask for help, many older people in rural areas want to remain self sufficient as they have been all of their lives	Getting info out as many times as possible, especially if it comes from a trusted source e.g. District Nurse Possibly use community champion i.e. local volunteers			

Issue of Concern	Barrier	Incentive/possible solution	Importance rating 1 (least) to 3(most)		
			Middlesbrough	Hambleton Richmond	Taunton
	Reluctance to discuss income with strangers where help is means tested	Getting info out as many times as possible, especially if it comes from a trusted source e.g. District Nurse Possibly use community champion i.e. local volunteers Reassurance re confidentiality of info			
Reticence of householders to engage (cont)	Worries that rent may be increased if the accommodation is improved – some of our residents are in accommodation where they are only paying a ,'peppercorn' rent.	Reassurance Information			
	Pride no charity	One to one discussion		1	
	Too old to face disruption	One to one discussion and offers to alternate accommodation		1	

Appendix F: Barriers and solutions from PCT

Barrier As Worded by Respondents	Comments	Solution As Worded by Respondents	Comments
Reluctance to ask for help and older people wishing to remain self sufficient	Agree but ultimately there needs to be a respect for peoples wishes	Sustained information from trusted sources such as health care professionals / community champions	Agree
Reluctance to discuss income with strangers	Agree	As above plus reassurance about the confidentiality of information	Questions need to be worded carefully and with sensitivity. Health care professionals need to feel, as comfortable with the questions as the clients. Also needs to be a clear role distinction; health care professionals can assist in the process but beyond a certain level of detail this should be covered by

			more relevant professionals since they have neither the detailed knowledge nor the time resources.
Too Old to face disruption	Agree	One to one discussion	Yes but if enough support.
Fear of change for the elderly	Agree	As above	Down to the level of support, not just from professionals but from carers/family
Partner agencies competing rather than true collaboration	Agree: the PCT surprised by how many organisations are involved in the process and found this very confusing	Shared initiatives, targets, systems; single point of contact programmes	The production of a local Affordable Warmth Strategy by Middlesbrough B.C. will improve things. Important for partner organisations to see what's in it for them. Provide a single point of contact for referral so it is a clear consistent point for both the public and organisations. The point of contact can be used to "triage" referrals and then pass them on to the relevant organisation. There needs to be a consistent communication of such a process and a line of publicity so that everyone knows what is going on. Partners need to see the contribution it makes to their agenda. As regards the PCT they are definitely on board the process. Before the local strategy in Middlesbrough there was a lot of subliminal conflict and cross over – this all needed to be put aside for more effective partnership working to address fuel poverty issues. Because there are limited resources it is essential that there is strong partnership working.
Lack of shared information and good practice; Lack of coordination	See above	Single point of contacts programme and Affordable Warmth Strategy	See above
Lack of Capacity health / social care organisations to do training and release staff	Agree	Support form partner organisations – training must be specific, brief and practical	Agree; short and succinct training; just what is absolutely needed.
Difficulty getting information to hard to reach groups especially the isolated elderly in rural areas	Agree	Awareness raising and advice from a range of health and social care professionals	Have a lot of staff on the ground linking into these groups already and raising awareness of fuel poverty in these groups. However, key health and social care staff such as, community nurses and matrons, health visitors, community health development workers, health improvement specialists, health and social care workers, would benefit from a short training session

Appendix G: Barriers and solutions from WarmFront

Barrier As Worded by Respondents	Comments	Solution As Worded by Respondents	Comments
Restrictive grant schemes; Warmfront does not help everyone who is in fuel poverty	Agree	Review eligibility and content of scheme	Yes, extend to a wider group
Complexity of interactions between stakeholder organisations, EAGA and energy companies	Agree	Planned regional/ sub regional mail out campaigns driven by benefits system	Could notify people in their benefit notification letters and annual re-notification letters. As the Warmfront grant operates on an account basis where a client can reapply for further measures, each client should be clearly aware of their full grant entitlement, the balance of their account, how long it is available for and how and when to reapply (a vital point)
Unable to afford	Agree	Benefit entitlement check	Working now with the welfare rights people to increase the amount of people on council tax benefit to increase the number of people who are then eligible for the Warmfront grant.
Surveyors and installers not giving the best advice	Disagree		
Difficulty dealing with fuel providers	Agree		
Income barriers		Offer grant to cover all with incomes less than £15000, the present restrictions are discriminatory	Yes but establishing the system may be complex
Passing out leaflets in the hope that people will make an application	Works but only a partial solution; no applicable to the hard to persuade who are now being targeted		
Lack of English language	Being targeted EAGA and NEA with leaflets and DVD in 14 languages		
No specific target for health organisations therefore may not be prioritised	Health people being asked to do too many things. The clarity of the message is the issue.		
Partner agencies competing for targets and referrals rather than true collaboration.	Yes this is sometimes a problem in some instances between EEC and Warmfront.	Encourage shared initiatives and single point of contact...	The bigger picture is the solution here – the new EEC next year should target the able to pay market and Warmfront should remain focussed on priority customers with a clear divide between the two for the benefit of the client.
Age discrimination (old =	The way older people are presented is very stereotypical		

poor)	and this may put them off applying as they don't necessarily identify themselves in this way..		
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Appendix H: Barriers and solutions from MEC

Barrier As Worded by Respondents	Comments	Solution As Worded by Respondents	Comments
Grant schemes can be complicated and people lack time and understanding to complete applications	Agree; Even the BME community officer who fills in forms on behalf of BME claimants has to ring the Warmfront grant helpline. The hardest part is know what benefits qualify for help	Making process easier by EEACs completing referrals and providing simple explanations	Agee
Restrictive grant schemes; Warmfront does not help everyone who is in fuel poverty	Agree; people can still be fuel poor and on the 'wrong' benefits or with lots of unavoidable outgoings and the scheme does not help them	Review eligibility and content of scheme	Eligibility could include all people on benefits
Complexity of interactions between stakeholder organisations, EAGA and energy companies	Agree; this switches people off- a more streamlined targeted approach is needed		
Unable to pay the difference beyond the £2700 grant.	This barrier is exacerbated by the use of the most expensive installers for the schemes; instead the schemes could use more local installers which would also have added benefits for the local economy		
Not accessing the hard to reach	This is being tackled to some extent in Middlesbrough by benefit mail outs but it isn't necessarily capturing non-English speaking residents. Have also undertaken a local of face to face work with residents but still difficult to engage as people tend not to want to give information on the doorstep these days.		
Language related barriers	Middlesbrough Environment City has a dedicated BME worker and more multi-language leaflets and information are available so this is being tackled now. Also have a direct portal to Warmfront so MEC can submit customers applications forms and the BME officer can track their progress		
Unable to see the benefits of the scheme	People do get measures installed such as cavity wall insulation but they often don't realise the actual saving		

	because of rising costs of energy and because people have a tendency to spend what they have without assigning additional income savings to energy saving measures installed		
Difficulty understanding bills	Yes definitely, people find it difficult to assess their usage and adjust it accordingly		
Training to the wrong health and social workers	People in the Health community need correct training and information at the right level. Need to utilise them to help make people aware there is help they can access.		
Organisations reluctant to work together	In our experience less a reluctance to work together and more an issue of resourcing		